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ABSTRACT

Nine secondary school libraries in New Zealand were examined to determine how often and how well students and teachers were using the library resources available to them. Both teachers and students were surveyed concerning their use of the library, the library skills they thought to be important, and their perceptions of the function of the librarian, library assistant, or teacher in the library. Based on the survey results and personal observations, it is concluded that school libraries in New Zealand suffer from the fact that many of them are being run by library assistants without professional training or teacher-librarians whose time is limited by other obligations. Suggestions for improvement include greater emphasis on inservice training for both teachers and library assistants, a shift in emphasis from the library as a teaching space to the library as a resource center, promotion of reading for pleasure and the development of reading lists and displays, and more supervision of library assistants in individual school libraries. The text is supplemented by photographs and tables, and two appendices detail the main characteristics of each library, including library staff and collections, and a summary of the students' responses to the questionnaire. A 26-item select bibliography is provided as well as 15 references. (EW)

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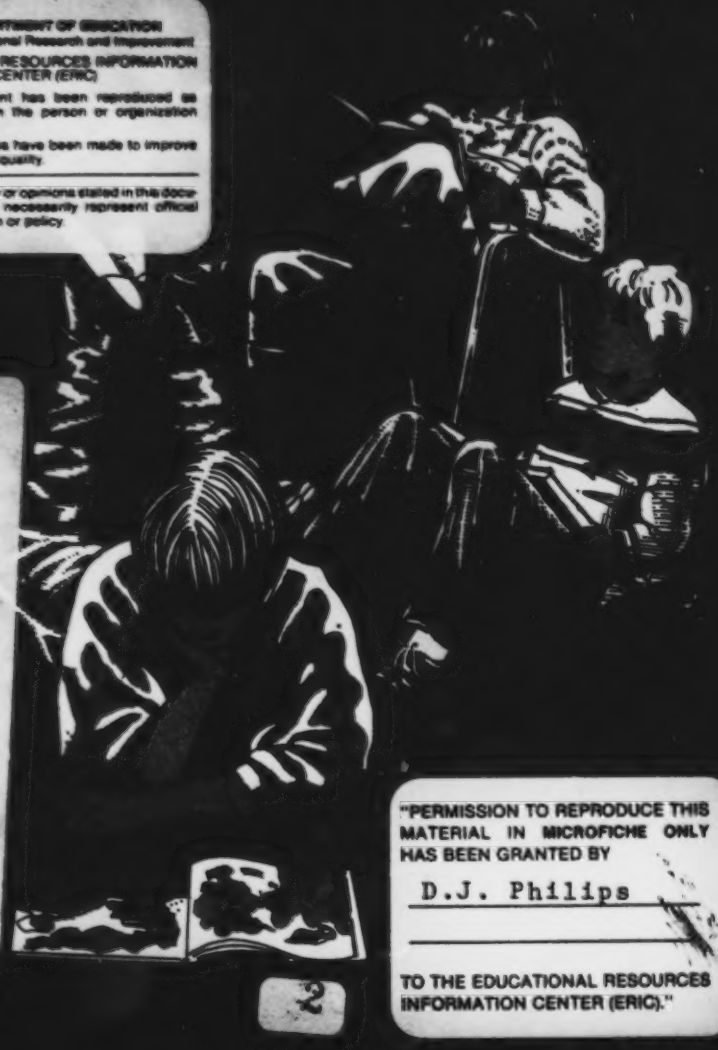

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Studies in Education No. 38

The Secondary School Library

The Secondary School Library

Dukedom Large Enough?

Patricia Smart

. . . my library
Was dukedom large enough . . .
Prospero, *The Tempest*, Act 1, Sc. 2

New Zealand Council for
Educational Research

Wellington, 1985

New Zealand Council
for Educational Research
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Wellington

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Finally, thanks are due to those of my friends who gave me moral support and shared with me their experiences of the libraries in their schools, strengthening my conviction that there is still a need for kindly, personalized guidance in our school libraries.

Patricia Smart

Clear signposting and simple, accessible displays attract potential borrowers.

1 Introduction

The origin and purpose of the study

A number of reports and articles on libraries in New Zealand have appeared over the years which draw attention to libraries in schools. These culminated in the strongly worded recommendations of Professor Sara Fenwick[1] on staffing, resources and buildings together with the subsequent report of the Working Party on School Libraries (the Foley Report)[2] and, most recently, the report of the Secondary Staffing Working Party[3]. None of these has suggested that there are any grounds for complacency about the present ways in which libraries in schools are being used and developed.

The majority of secondary schools today probably have their libraries located in buildings which, if not ideal, are at least clean, well-lit and warm, but book stocks, which only recently were built up to a level adequate to the needs of students, are not being maintained to the same extent. There is still no minimum or core curriculum content ensuring that all students will be taught library skills sufficient for their needs both at school and beyond. And the last significant change in staffing (the creation more than 20 years ago of the position of library assistant)[4] was designed to satisfy a short term need; staffing has not been altered in response to the very strong recommendations in all these reports, which are unanimous in declaring library staffing to be the area most in need of attention.

In spite of the wealth of this material,[5] it appears that little attention has been paid to the ways in which the libraries are used. How much and how often do teachers and students use the avail-

able resources? What are their opinions, needs and expectations about school libraries, and how often are these met? Do students of all levels use the libraries to the same extent, or with the same purpose? What are students taught about the skills needed to use a library effectively? And how well prepared to use tertiary institutional libraries or public libraries are students once they leave school? There seemed to be no readily available information on these issues. Also, it seemed that even amongst teachers there was a general lack of understanding of what 'the library period' entailed for those of their colleagues who had classes in the library, and it seemed reasonable to assume that many of those involved in policy-making for school libraries, and in possible professional training for school library staff, were unlikely to be better informed.

Consequently, a study was proposed to seek answers to some of these questions and to try to build up a picture of activities in a typical school library. Interest in the project was shown by the School of Library Studies at Wellington Teachers College, the School Library Service, and the Resources Development Division of the Department of Education. The New Zealand Council for Educational Research undertook to sponsor the research.

The researcher has studied English, History, Languages, Art History and Music. In addition to an Arts degree, she has a New Zealand Library Association Certificate and worked for a number of years as a school librarian in an independent school, where she had full responsibility for the library and its development. In that capacity she devised a library skills programme in consultation with the English teachers, and taught it to third form students; she also gave tuition to student librarians, generally sixth and seventh formers, to give them a better understanding of the functions of libraries. A period as Convenor of an Independent Schools Committee on Libraries, and involvement with the former School Libraries Association brought opportunities to meet the staff of other school libraries in New Zealand, while travel overseas provided knowledge of school libraries in Australia, North America and the United Kingdom. In addition, she was married for many years to an English teacher who was closely involved with the development and use of libraries in three different schools, and many of his experiences appeared to confirm the findings reported here. She is now employed part-time as a librarian in Christchurch.

Methodology

After preliminary discussion with representatives of the organizations mentioned above, two schools were selected for a pilot programme. Permission was obtained from the principals to spend time in each of these schools to observe the normal daily routine of the libraries. A student questionnaire was devised and, after being tested in the two schools, was modified slightly and enlarged to incorporate further questions.

Next, schools were selected for participation in the study. For practical reasons, it was decided to limit the survey to nine schools in the Canterbury region. Permission was sought from principals and teacher-librarians to carry out the survey. Two schools refused. The principal of one doubted the benefits of the study to the school, while the other was concerned that the survey might adversely affect plans for a new library building. Most schools, however, welcomed the idea and were very eager to provide any possible assistance.

The nine schools selected represent both State and Independent, single-sex and co-educational, city and rural schools. Some schools were excluded from the sample: those the researcher was already familiar with, or which had distinctive features, such as having an exceptionally high roll, or more adult students than average.

The final list of nine schools was made up as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1 *Characteristics of the schools in the sample*

School	*Level*	*Sex*	*Type*	*Location*	*Roll*
1	High school	Co-ed	State	Urban	1,500
2	High school	Boys	State	Urban	1,100
3	High school	Girls	State	Urban	900
4	High school	Co-ed	State	Urban	1,050
5	High school	Boys	Independent	Urban	680
6	Form I-VII	Co-ed	State	Rural	600
7	High school	Co-ed	State	Urban	800
8	High school	Co-ed	State	Semi-rural	1,000
9	Form I-VII	Girls	Independent	Urban	500

Table 2 *Participating teachers, classes and students in the sample*

	Teachers	*Classes observed*	*Classes filling questionnaire*	*Students in these classes*	*Undirected students*	*Total students*
School 1	7	13	8	189	35	224
School 2	4	7	5	98	30	128
School 3	6	11	6	103	34	137
School 4	5	12	5	120	29	149
School 5	3	6	4	98	33	131
School 6	4	7	5	94	21	115
School 7	5	8	7	141	39	180
School 8	7	16	9	172	42	214
School 9	3	3	3	32	35	67
Total	44	83	52	1,047	298	1,345

In all, allowing for the smallness of the region, this was felt to be a sufficiently large sample of Canterbury schools. As the research progressed, it became apparent that there is little uniformity in secondary school libraries, so, whereas the practices of schools throughout the country may well differ more than they concur, it is unlikely that a larger sample would have produced substantially different results.

The research was carried out only in the libraries of the nine schools, since the focus of the study was to describe what happened in them. There is still useful information to be gathered, however, about those pupils and teachers who do not visit the libraries at all.

Staff were informed that the main purpose of the study was to assess the use made of the libraries, not to advise, nor to report on activities to the principal. After studying the library timetables, days were carefully selected in the expectation that as many students as possible could be observed. Information was obtained about hours worked by the staff, annual spending, methods of book selection and the size of the school roll. The state of the book stock, particularly reference books and literature, was noted and a record made of the available periodicals. Questionnaires were given to the students in most classes which came to the library; however, some of these were not used when it was found that a disproportionate

number of classes from one level had completed questionnaires. Teachers accompanying classes were also given a short questionnaire to complete which, apart from identifying the classes, sought information about their reasons for visiting the library and their views about some of its features. A proportion of students visiting in lunch-hours and study periods also filled out questionnaires. In addition, as much as possible of the activity taking place in each of the libraries was observed, and recorded, supplemented by observations made in the pilot schools.

School libraries in New Zealand

The New Zealand Census of Libraries taken in 1979 showed that there were 383 libraries in secondary schools of all types (Forms I-VII, Forms III-VII, District High Schools and Area Schools).

These libraries are managed by teachers designated teacher-librarians, who are not required to have training in librarianship. Until 1960 teacher-librarians received a time allowance to work in the school library. Since there was a shortage of teachers at that time the present position of library assistant was introduced, and the time allocation for the teacher-librarians was left to the discretion of district senior inspectors (secondary). According to the Administration Manual, 'The scheme was designed to release the teacher for teaching duties and add to the range of school services, increase the efficiency of the library, provide better pupil supervision, and release the teacher-librarian from the daily problem of library supervision.'[6] Fenwick, in 1975, noted that teachers were allocated between one and nine hours a week on average for library work, depending on the size of the school. Today where the teacher holds a position of responsibility for the library position, the PR time allowance may be added, but few have this status. In 1975 half of the teacher-librarians were also heads of subject departments. The duties of teacher-librarians are not clearly defined, and would seem to consist largely of filling the gaps left by the library assistant. This leaves the energetic and imaginative teacher-librarian free to develop the library in any way he sees fit.

The Administration Manual also states that, 'The duties required of the library assistant cannot be defined comprehensively

as these will vary according to the size of the school, the organisation of the library, and the experience and skill of the appointee.'[7] Assistants with library training can be expected to attend to cataloguing and classification of books, to book purchasing, to supervision of student librarians, and to providing an advisory service for staff and students. It is not clear, however, who should carry out these functions in the absence of a trained assistant. In practice, of course, they are done by untrained assistants.

According to the 1979 census, only 12 percent (92) of library assistants had any form of library qualifications, although this number will almost certainly have increased as principals seek more highly trained staff, and positions in libraries of all kinds become more difficult to find. However, many who complete the in-service New Zealand Library Studies Certificate (at the Wellington Teachers College School of Library Studies) will then become interested in working in libraries which offer greater career opportunities.

The number of hours worked by library assistants is determined by the size of the school and ranges from 400 hours a year for a school with a roll of up to 300, to 1600 hours for schools with rolls in excess of 900. Library assistants are deemed to be ancillary (that is, non-professional) staff, even if they have professional library qualifications, and in remuneration and status are more closely allied to school secretaries and nurses than to teachers.

Support services are available to school libraries from regional offices of the School Library Service, a division of the National Library of New Zealand, which provides advice, some technical help for new or expanding libraries, book loans to supplement the schools' collections, and some minimal 'on-the-job' training for staff. Assistance must be requested by the schools, however, as the service does not have authority to do more than offer help and make recommendations to principals and staff.

Fenwick commented at some length on the design of the standard school library, and it is not necessary to say more about it here. But, of the 11 state school libraries visited for this study, only four had such a standard building, and two of those were the schools in the pilot survey. While it is grander in scale than some of the adapted classrooms, this design does not appear to lead to significantly greater efficiency. Its merit is its flexibility. Within a

cuboid space there are various possibilities for arranging shelving, furniture, study carrels, the catalogue cabinets and the issue desk. Schools with these and other planned libraries also have the advantages of matching shelving and other furniture, while those with adapted classrooms generally have an assortment of older, often unsuitable, furnishings.

Finance for the book stock comes from a general account administered by the principal, but the swimming pool, the heating system, the library and other essentials all vie for a share of this fund. As Fenwick had a good deal to say about the selection of book stock, it does not need to be repeated here. Selection of books for any library requires time, skill and a good understanding of the needs of the users. For schools little guidance is available apart from the School Library Service's *Review*, a periodical publication with relevant articles and short book reviews. The Children's, Young Persons and Schools chapters of the New Zealand Library Association arrange in-service programmes which almost invariably include sessions on book selection. However, there are some impediments to library assistants wanting to attend these, and financial constraints mean that courses are now fewer than they used to be.

Library skills

Throughout this work reference is made to 'library skills', a term used to describe the whole range of self-help techniques which can be used for finding information in any library. They include the use of the card catalogue, subject index and shelf guides to locate books; the use of indexes in books, especially encyclopedias, and all types of dictionaries, atlases and gazetteers, and yearbooks. Other techniques include judging the amount of time needed to find information, and knowing when to seek help from the librarian.

2 Profiles of Nine Libraries

School 1

*The library is a very important part of the school environment because pupils regard it as a privilege to go there.**

School 1 was a co-educational high school with a roll of approximately 1,500. Its library was in the central part of the school, and was equivalent in size to three classroom spaces run together. One room retained its dividing wall; it was called the Resource Library and contained the Pure Science, Applied Science, History and Geography collections and the Vertical File. In the main (double) room there was a good amount of space, and the sight lines from the office were unimpeded. Visually it was a pleasant library, with a view of the gardens at the front of the school, well-used display areas, with sculptures done by students, and books and magazines. Sign-posting was clear; since the fixed wooden shelving was severely limiting and accounted for the very arbitrary division of the Dewey sections between the rooms, the signs and guides were important.

The 1981 budget was $4,000: $3,500 was spent on books, and the remainder on stationery. The comprehensive reference collection was well-arranged in a central position. The vertical file was particularly well-organized and up-to-date, each file having an issue card on the back of its clear plastic envelope. Periodicals included the *Listener, Popular Mechanics, Motor, Wings, Seventeen, Hot Rod,*

* The italicized statements are quotations from teachers participating in the study. Note, too, that since the profiles were compiled changes (e.g. in staff) have occurred in some of these libraries.

Newspapers are a valuable resource for a number of subjects. They may also entice reluctant users to come to the library.

and the occasional copy of *Landfall* and *Islands*. Daily papers were also available.

Two library assistants between them worked a total of 47 hours, and the school nurse came in to assist if she had no other call on her time. The teacher-librarian had a time allowance of two half-days for library work. The library assistants spent a good deal of time in contact with students, helping them to locate books and to use the fiction lists which were mounted on boards and displayed prominently. Library assistants and class teachers also consulted a good deal while classes were present. The atmosphere was friendly, relaxed and orderly. During the lunch-hours, although the library assistants were available in the main part of the library to help students, they were seldom asked for assistance. The teacher-librarian spent little time in the library while the researcher was there, and his only contact with the students in that time was disciplinary.

In an average week this library issued 550 books. A very full timetable did not allow for sixth or seventh forms to book in, so very few senior students were seen. Over a dozen classes were observed, as well as many students with study periods. Teachers sometimes came to the library without classes; this was one of the few schools where this happened. Library skills were not taught in a formal way, but most of the teachers who brought classes spent time with students using the catalogue, helping them to select books, and to use reference books. Surprisingly, only half the students considered reference books 'very important' and only 40 percent thought they should have to learn how to use an encyclopedia.

Frequently, two classes had to be booked into the library at the same time for their weekly half-hour, leading to such comments from the teachers as: 'a library twice the size would be four times as useful', and 'we have insufficient time in the library, which is why I don't do study skills'. This may also explain why, in a well-run library, with a tidy catalogue and a wide-ranging reference section, and plenty of friendly assistance for those who needed it, only a little over half of the students claimed to have achieved their objectives — the lowest proportion of any school.

All seven teachers responded with comments about school libraries in general, and almost all expressed some dissatisfaction with what they were able to achieve in the library period. One teacher, who was so busy demonstrating library skills in a practical way that she scarcely had time to hand out and fill in questionnaires, still managed to write at length about her sense of frustration: 'It is a shame school libraries have to be treated as classrooms rather than as an area more freely available for research, study and reading — especially as in the case here with two classes often timetabled together allowing little if any room for other pupils. I think libraries are increasingly becoming the "poor relation" to AV equipment and other resources — not enough emphasis is put on them in some schools. I feel I don't use the library as effectively as I should, mainly because I'm still not familiar enough with the contents.' This teacher was one of the most competent library users seen at any stage of the survey. Another teacher saw the library in social terms: 'I use it as a reward with some classes. I've also used it for getting to know a small class — a time to talk to individuals.'

This library was a restful yet efficient environment. The library assistants were confident in manner, helpful to inquirers, and welcoming to visitors. It was a pleasant place to work in, and teachers clearly valued the surroundings. Their comments about the problems of school libraries, therefore, carry weight, coming as they do from informed and thoughtful users.

School 2

Unable to offer sufficient services to keep teachers fully informed.

School 2 was a boys' school with a roll of about 1100. The library was centrally located in a specially-designed building which, in spite of its imposing appearance, had a number of drawbacks: the usable floor space was limited; poor sight lines made supervision very difficult, and there were too many fixed furnishings for it to be possible to correct this; the workroom was too small; display space was minimal; the overall effect of the building was intimidating. Nevertheless, to make the library more welcoming, and its contents more accessible to those students who needed enticing to use it, the library could have been provided with adequate sign-posts, and regularly changing subject displays. The catalogue needed attention, too, with cards still filed bearing the note 'missing 1975'. The photocopier was not working on any of the widely separated days spent in this school.

The total budget in 1981 was rather more than $3,000, of which $2,700 was spent on book-stock. The reference section of this library was well endowed with a variety of general and specific works, and it appeared to be heavily used. Although the vertical file had been carefully developed at some stage, it had been allowed to become out-of-date. Yearbooks would have bridged some of the gaps, but none was available. Because of space limitations, the literature stock had been divided; most of it was on the mezzanine floor, which was restricted to seniors only. Periodicals were mostly of the give-away variety, or 'boys' 'sporting magazines such as *Seaspray, Popular Mechanic, Motor.* There was no sign of the *Listener.*

The library assistant worked for 33 hours a week, and on those occasions when she had to visit the School Library Service, an

ancillary staff member supervised the library. A great number of junior students worked as 'librarians', but very few seniors. It was surprising to observe a third former cataloguing books, after the library assistant had done the classification, since this is a function specifically mentioned by the Administration Manual as one reserved for 'qualified library assistants', and usually accorded some importance by trained librarians. The teacher-librarian was allocated 2½ hours a week, and had some lunch-hour responsibilities outside the library as well. In his view, all teachers, but English teachers especially, were too burdened with extra-curricular obligations to work out library skills programmes, or to make regular visits to the library to check on new books. He added that having a full-time teacher in the library who could do all the teaching there would benefit the whole school.

Library skills were regarded as the responsibility of all departments. In order to emphasize that the teaching of skills was neither the prerogative nor the obligation of the English Department, a fourth form scheme had been devised with a comprehensive block cutting across the timetable. A booklet contained information and assignments from a variety of printed sources. One class worked on this library skills programme, in what would have been technical drawing time; the teacher said he was giving up this time 'as a favour to the English department', but, apart from disciplining some very noisy boys, he took no part in the proceedings at all. Without direction, the boys worked half-heartedly, alone or in groups, on their assignments, though few appeared to achieve much.

This school used reading record cards, which some teachers claimed were invaluable. However, at no stage did a class teacher refer to the cards, nor was there any discussion with the students about their reading. The cards showed that very few senior students were borrowing books.

After studying the library timetable, a two-week one, the researcher selected days for visits when bookings were comparatively heavy. There were still many hours when there were no classes in the library, however, and some booked classes did not appear at all; so, despite this planning, in three days only seven classes were observed (with four different teachers), of which five completed questionnaires. After ribald or unintelligible questionnaires were

discarded, there remained a total of 128 responses from students, 98 of whom attended in classes.

Just over half of those surveyed visited the library on their own at least once a fortnight. Also, just over half of all students claimed to have achieved the objective of their library visits; of those who did not, 23 percent claimed it was because their friends were talking. Certainly, when students were in the main part of the library, a studious atmosphere was rare.

Information about issues was not readily obtainable, but a check by the researcher revealed that about 250 books a week were issued.

School 3

> *I think that all libraries should cater for a wide variety of interests but very importantly cater for* all *levels of reading ability.*

One of the older schools in the survey, School 3 was a girls' school with a roll of just over 900. The library, upstairs in the middle of the main school block, was reached by an imposing staircase. A total of four classrooms had been adapted; a double room had a workroom-office in one corner, another room, equipped with carrels, was used as a senior study, while yet another housed the history and reference collections and the vertical file. The main room was homely; though old and rather shabby, every effort had been made to create welcoming surroundings, with pictures, plants, book displays, and fat cushions on the floor.

The 1981 budget was $2,500. The reference collection was reasonably comprehensive and extensively used. One science teacher commented favourably on a junior science encyclopedia which she found very useful with lower ability classes. The value of the collection had been highlighted by the 'disappearance' of some volumes of encyclopedias. As a result, some of the more popular reference books were moved into the workroom and locked up if the library assistant was not present. Other schools have dealt with this problem in a similar way. The literature section, particularly New Zealand literature, was minimal — presumably the English department was well-stocked — and classification of it was inconsistent. However, the catalogue and the vertical file were up-to-date

Photocopiers are popular with staff and students. A discussion of copyright laws and the reasons for them should be included in orientation programmes.

and tidy and often used by teachers and students, and the photocopier was in considerable demand. The limited range of periodicals included the *Listener*, *Woman's Weekly*, *Consumer*, and a number of free issues, as well as daily papers, were available.

Between them the two library assistants worked for 32½ hours a week. During lunch-hours, the principal assistant and the teacher-librarian were both available to assist students, and at other times of the day students and staff frequently made use of the library. The teacher-librarian was allocated six 50-minute periods a week for work in the library.

The fortnightly timetable used for the library was heavily booked for a wide range of subjects: in addition to teachers of English, the main users of the library taught economics, social

studies, Japanese, Latin and science. Different parts of the library were often used by two classes at a time. In the three days the researcher spent at this school, 12 classes were observed, as well as many teachers and students who came into the library for short visits, or to spend a study period there. Questionnaires were distributed to six classes, and involved six teachers and 34 undirected students, making a total of 171 students who completed the questionnaires. The subjects being studied in the library included Latin and Japanese, which were not taught in the other schools surveyed.

Library skills were taught by any teacher at any time. No formal programme existed, and no worksheets were available to assist teachers in devising their own. While reading record cards were kept for third and fourth form students, this was done more as a means of tracing overdue books than to gain information on reading patterns. Weekly issues averaged about 270 books from the main stock, with an unrecorded number from a stack-room housing older books kept for senior students and staff only.

Of the students at this school, 81 percent (well above the overall average of 68 percent) regarded their library knowledge as likely to be useful beyond school, though this figure was boosted by the highly motivated language students.

In one class, 80 percent claimed that they had not achieved their objectives because of the unavailability of books. This was a French class with the task of finding out about French wines and cheeses. Unfortunately the teacher had failed to notify the library assistant in advance about this project, and had not checked what books were available at the school on this subject. Consequently, the library assistant was unable to draw on the resources of the School Library Service in time to supplement the library's meagre stock. In spite of the frustration experienced by this class, 60 percent of all the pupils surveyed in this school stated that their objectives had been achieved.

Reference books scored highest at this school, with 74 percent of the students rating them as 'very important', although this figure was boosted by 95 percent of the Latin class responding in this category.

School 4

I think library design is an under-developed art; it is a pity the library counts as teaching space so the study/work area intrudes on the pleasure/leisure area.

The fourth school was a co-educational one with a roll of approximately 1050. In its library, apart from the entrance from the corridor, a double glass doorway used at lunch-time by students opened on to a garden. Two student librarians were posted to check that books had been issued correctly before the users left. The pleasant outlook complemented the interior, embellished with displays of books, artwork and plants. Clear signposts and a logical arrangement of books created a more orderly library than most. An upstairs area, although designated senior study, was used instead to store unwanted books. A computer terminal, used by students under the observation of the library assistant, filled an awkward space under a stairway. The catalogue was in good order and consulted frequently.

The 1981 budget was $1,650. The collection of books while not large (17,500) was of a high quality, reasonably new, varied, and in good repair. The reference section was adequate, but lacked a vertical file, while shortage of space forced an illogical division of encyclopedias. As in many libraries, the furniture was poorly planned, causing arbitrary divisions of several other parts of the collection. A diverse range of periodicals included the *Listener, Unesco Courier, Seventeen, Consumer, Popular Mechanics, National Geographic, Time, World Tennis* and *Te Maori*. Maps and newspapers were available too.

The library assistant, trained as a primary teacher and as a librarian, worked 33 hours a week in the library, and spent much of her time in contact with students. All third forms were scheduled for two or three familiarization visits at the beginning of the year, and she was always available to talk to other classes and to help individuals. The heavily booked library, with a workroom which was not completely enclosed, made it difficult for the librarian to type when classes were present. The library assistant assumed responsibility for discipline, even in the presence of teachers, by virtue of her teacher training and as a matter of commonsense,

although this is expressly prohibited by the Administration Manual.

The teacher-librarian, who happened to be relieving in that position while the survey was being carried out, seemed to have very little involvement with the library, but showed interest in the survey and willingly offered his help.

This was a very busy library, with a full class timetable, and popular with students in their lunch-hours. It was used a great deal for remedial reading classes; the two teachers who came with these classes would spend at least part of their time sitting and reading alongside the students.

There appeared to be no formal library skills programme other than the orientation work done with third formers by the library assistant. This may explain, at least in part, the low rating accorded teachers by students answering the questionnaire, since over two-thirds of the students viewed their teacher as 'not important'.

Book issues averaged 400 to 500 a week. Newspapers were clearly a special draw card: a quarter of the students rated them as 'very important' (the highest proportion of any school), whereas 57 percent rated them 'quite important'.

The reading records used by this school were referred to by the teachers, not just for checking overdue books, but also for commenting to the students on their reading. This use of reading records by reading specialists and English teachers has considerable merit in monitoring the standard of reading in a school. In many cases, the reading records showed quite regular borrowing up to the seventh form, followed by very little or none at all. They also showed that some senior students read little more than 'teenage' books.

In the two days at this school 12 classes, including several remedial reading ones, were observed and questionnaires from 120 students (five classes) used, with five teachers involved. In addition, 29 students completed questionnaires on their own.

School 5

The library is too often seen as the preserve of the English department; other departments are reluctant to use it on a regular basis. It

should contain reference materials for all levels, including staff. Not enough money is allocated by government, schools, etc.

This is an independent boys' school with a roll of approximately 680. It is a boarding school, and branches of good public libraries are within easy reach.

The library building, scheduled for replacement, was on the perimeter of the school grounds. It seemed to be either too hot or too cold, with the inadequate workroom space extremely cold even on warm days. One corner of the prefabricated structure was a music teaching room, which provided anyone in the library with an assortment of scrapes and squeals belying the statement in the school's orientation handbook that the library is a quiet place. A new library is to be built when the school is integrated into the state system. Meanwhile, attempts had been made to turn this unpromising building into a comfortable, if not completely relaxing one, with carpet, new tables and chairs, flexible shelving, and good display areas. A plan of the library and Dewey charts were also useful, but the shelf labels could have been bolder. Books from the School Library Service were displayed, but a rather more imaginative use of the display space was needed, with occasional changes. There was no vertical file. The catalogue with its mystifying idiosyncrasies, posing problems for users, reflected the staff's lack of training.

The 1981 budget total was estimated at $330 per term. A library evening held each year enabled parents to select books from displays mounted by bookshops, and donate them to the school. Uusually about $500 worth of books were acquired in this way. The reference collection was barely adequate for such a large school offering a full range of seventh form subjects. Periodicals were limited, probably reflecting the very small budget. In general, the book stock was quite wide-ranging, although a trifle old-fashioned and shabby-looking.

Access to New Zealand literature, better represented in this school library than in any other visited, was hampered by inconsistencies in classification.

The library assistant expressed some concern with the system of book selection. In her opinion, teachers did not give adequate information about their needs and, lacking advanced education

herself, she found selection difficult. She made good use of the School Library Service *Review*, but the budget did not allow subscription to any other reviewing journal.

This school had no official teacher-librarian. Although two teachers of English had been asked 'to help as much as they were able', they were allowed no set time for this purpose. In effect, therefore, the library assistant had sole charge, although she had no formal training as either teacher or librarian. She was employed for 30 hours a week. At least once a fortnight, using her own car, she visited the School Library Service, some distance from the school, to augment the school's book stock. This took quite a large proportion of her time.

Although the library assistant at this school had been appointed without experience, it appeared that she had not been required to attend in-service courses. She had limited contact with the teaching staff, was given inadequate notice of their needs, and lacked the support of a teacher-librarian. It is remarkable that, despite these handicaps, she gave considerable help to boys who sought it, and had made an unattractive building reasonably pleasant and inviting. That this work was recognized by the students was indicated by the three-quarters who rated the librarian 'very important', while another 12 percent stated that she was 'quite important'.

This school had an orientation handbook which stated that 'the library is a place of quite and silence . . . the librarian will help you find the type of book you enjoy reading . . . *Boys who read pass exams*' (the school's emphasis). Since it can be demonstrated that boys who read do not necessarily pass exams, while boys who do not read extensively may well pass them, the threatening tone of this statement seemed to do little to encourage either reading or use of the library. If teachers had made greater use of the resources available, students might have come to appreciate more the benefits of reading.

In three days at this school six classes were observed. Questionnaires were completed by 131 students, of whom 98 were in 4 classes with 3 different teachers; the remaining 33 were undirected.

The students referred to the catalogue infrequently, commonly to discover whether any new *Asterix* books had been added. While the state of the catalogue may well have deterred student users, the infrequent consultation did not excuse its disorganized condition.

Library skills were supposedly taught at all levels, and to demonstrate this a sixth form was given a library assignment. Sadly, this was all too clearly adapted from a third form exercise and appeared to have little relevance for the boys who were doing it. The library assistant had the opportunity to speak to all third form boys at the beginning of each year, when she explained library routines and procedures. At the same time, teachers also explained the catalogue and classification system, but no revision of this occurred routinely at any level. In the circumstances it was perhaps not surprising to come across some third formers who, in the third week of the new school year, said they had not yet visited the library with a class.

Book issues were said to average approximately 300 a week, perhaps an over-optimistic total which could not be confirmed.

School 6

I consider school library time must be used to further knowledge and understanding of the workings of a library while fostering an appreciation of and liking for them . . . The course of instruction devised by the librarian here has kept the children interested and has taught them a lot. I consider it to have been of the greatest value and would recommend it.

Under-used as the central character situation of a school. Needs to project and share its enthusiasms and resources.

That these two comments could be made by teachers in the same school perhaps says more about the teachers than about the library under discussion. This school was not the only one where teachers had differing opinions and standards in respect of the school library, but in no other school were they quite so divergent.

School 6 was a rural, co-educational, Forms I-VII school with a roll of approximately 600. The library was in a new building, an L-shaped room with a pleasant outlook, and, while it was well lit and attractively furnished, there was a shortage of seating at tables, and probably insufficient space for more tables. When the senior students, for example, who used it as a study-room for Correspondence School assignments, were joined, say, by Form I students working on a reference project, the space was heavily taxed. There

were some good display areas, with periodicals especially well set out in a central display. Shelving was flexible, but, unfortunately for some of the younger and smaller members of the school, the top shelf was too high for comfort. Signposts were inadequate — they were too few, and not bold enough.

Because the cataloguing had previously been done very poorly, the present library assistant was working to solve the worst of the problems. Some of the anomalies of classification also needed to be rectified, a time-consuming job for an already busy library assistant.

The budget for 1981 was $1,000. The reference collections appeared to be quite adequate for the needs of the secondary students, but the intermediate classes would probably have made good use of more reference books designed for their level. Periodicals included the *Listener, Time, Woman's Weekly, Reader's Digest* and *Squash*. Many periodicals were handed on to the library by staff members when they had finished with them and, though not particularly up-to-date, they added more variety than there would otherwise have been. The vertical file was not used throughout the study. Book issues averaged about 400 a week.

There were two library assistants. The principal one, who had done some teacher training and had a university degree, was at the school four days a week for six hours a day. The other library assistant worked for six hours on the remaining day. The teacher-librarian was new to the position and was taking time to sort out the position's priorities. He was also a head of department and, at the beginning of the school year, had to spend considerable time on departmental administration. The library assistant, therefore, tended to make most of the day-to-day decisions herself, assuming responsibility for discipline and for book selection. She had a good relationship with the teaching staff, and clearly saw part of her job as keeping them in touch with the library's acquisitions. She also made frequent personal contact with students, and on at least one occasion was left to supervise a class.

Teaching library skills was the responsibility of the library assistant. Teachers were expected to participate, but some of them regarded their time in the library as free and, although they stayed there, did not show much interest in the activities devised by the library assistant. At the request of the new teacher-librarian,

teachers had agreed to participate in a survey on the school library in an effort to discover which areas should be developed, how they felt about discipline in the library, and factors which limited or encouraged their using it for classes. The intention of the survey was to make library time available to any teacher who wanted it. It found that some teachers were concerned about the amount of noise which others permitted, about the use of the library as a study-room, and about stray visitors coming in during allocated time. Science teachers complained about English teachers having priority in library time-tabling.

Seven classes were observed, two of which were Form I, with none above Form V. In this school, apart from some students doing Correspondence School assignments, senior students seemed to be making no use of the library. However, a request made by a teacher who wanted to use the library for a Form VII class lacking a room was declined because the timetable indicated that other classes would be coming. In the event, these classes failed to arrive. Although the Form VII teacher probably intended to use the library as a substitute classroom only, the failure of these other classes to give notice that they would not be using the library illustrated the type of problems the science teachers had complained of.

Questionnaires from five classes (with four teachers) were used in the survey, giving a total of 94 students in class, and 21 undirected users. Although the presence of Forms I and II and the large number of seniors doing work for Correspondence School might have been expected to influence the results, analysis of the questionnaires showed that the school was reasonably typical.

School 7

I try to encourage senior (Form IV and above) pupils to use the library to their advantage, even if only for recreational reading, as many pupils after Form IV seem to read much less for recreation, perhaps due to pressure of other school work.

This was a co-educational school with a roll of a little over 800.

The library, a standard S68 building on the extreme edge of the school site, included a mezzanine floor which was used for storage

Display areas should be carefully arranged to make the greatest impact without overwhelming the user with too much information.

only. On the ground floor there were two teaching areas. The library appeared to be a bustling place, almost cluttered, with plenty of seating, eye-catching posters, displays of recent acquisitions, and information about careers and school activities. Signs were well placed and clear, and the vertical file, which was in good order, was arranged according to Dewey classification numbers. The 1981 budget was $4,000.

The sound reference collection was well-used, and conveniently located close to work tables. The few periodicals available were varied, and included the *Listener, Environmental Journal,* and *Geographical,* and back issues, filed in ringbinders, were prominently displayed. The literature section was of the same quality as some of the other schools, but not as comprehensive as those in the two independent boarding schools. The cataloguing and classification

were both accurate and up-to-date.

The library assistant worked for 25 hours a week, and had been at the school for several years. She reported that her predecessor had not encouraged library use, and that the negative image created had been hard to counteract. However, she had good relations with the teaching staff, and was always available to help students during her work hours. Unfortunately, as these were from 8.30 am to 2.00 pm, for the last hour of the school day the library was unattended.

The teacher-librarian, a trained librarian, was allocated four hours a week for library work. Other commitments in the school, however, occasionally involved her being away, such as on class camps. The head of the English department spent some time in the library at lunch-hours, so, on occasions, there were three knowledgeable staff members present for students to refer to. Their visible presence in the main part of the library, not in the workroom, may explain why this school had the highest proportion of students who saw their teachers as being 'very important' (15 percent).

Indeed, the library was so popular as a meeting place in lunch-hours that admission had to be limited on certain days to students from selected classes; thus, on some days of the week third formers might be admitted, on other days fourth formers.

Library skills were taught by English teachers at all levels of the school. The teacher-librarian herself prepared interesting assignments for her classes, often with the help of the library assistant, but there was no prescribed course. Since teachers worked out their own programmes, presumably it was possible for a pupil to pass through Forms III to VII without encountering a teacher who taught library skills. This may help to explain why only a little over half of the students (54 percent) at this school, compared with the average of 68 percent in the overall survey, thought that what they learned about their library would be useful after they left school.

Weekly issues, recorded very carefully, with notes to explain any fluctuations, ranged from 300 to 350.

In spite of remarks by English teachers to the effect that there should be more use by non-English teachers, the library assistant reported that science teachers used the library frequently, and music teachers occasionally. However, only eight classes were observed during the course of this study; others, though scheduled,

did not appear. The library was booked for less than half of the available time.

Seven classes, making a total of 141 students, completed questionnaires (with five teachers); in addition, 39 students filled in questionnaires on their own.

School 8

Excellent library.

Marvellous break in routine — chance to talk to kids individually — to encourage wider reading.

School 8 was a semi-rural co-educational school with a roll of about 1,000. The library was in the free-standing S68 design, with a mezzanine floor used solely to provide carrels for the use of senior students, a number of whom were doing Correspondence School classes. The main library space was divided into two teaching areas. Pot plants, book displays, posters and a display of pottery by a local craftsman enhanced the appearance, which was more serene than that of School 7 (the other school with a building of standard design), mainly because there were not quite so many posters and charts on the walls and there was more uniformity in the furnishings. It was located on the perimeter of the school grounds, with the entrance on the farthest side. While the vertical file was rarely consulted, the photocopier received heavy use. The catalogue was not immaculate, and with the shelf-list in particular rather disorganized, it was not surprising that it was rarely consulted.

The 1981 budget was $5,000. The reference collection, which would have been adequate in most schools, was frequently consulted by the science classes who often used the library, and teachers felt there was a need for more material suitable for junior forms. The periodicals ranged widely, with *Time, Newsweek, Listener, National Geographic, Popular Mechanics, Designscape, Horse and Pony,* all on display, and the daily newspaper was available on request. New Zealand literature, though, was scant and inaccurately classified, in spite of the presence on the staff of a teacher 'keen on New Zealand writing'.

The library assistant was employed for 32½ hours; she carried

out a minimum of supervisory duties, concentrating almost entirely on technical matters. As in all the schools, a number of pupil librarians were available, but their activities appeared to be supervised more closely by the teacher-librarian, who held meetings with them which the library assistant did not attend. The teacher-librarian was a head of department as well. Although the two positions overlapped, and he was uncertain of the precise time allocation for the library, he appeared to spend a considerable amount of time there.

Library skills were taught to all third formers by their English teachers. Each student was given a booklet made up of cyclostyled information and assignments taken from a variety of sources. Most third formers spent time in the library as part of their science programme, and some social studies classes also visited the library fairly regularly. In the English course, provision was made for revision of library skills in Form V.

The library timetable was a fortnightly one: English weeks alternated with elective weeks, when teachers could book any subject other than English. This seemed to work very successfully, with a great deal of enthusiasm amongst the science staff, in particular, for the chance to use the library. Because of this elective programme a wide range of classes was observed: 16 classes in three days, and a number of students with study periods or Correspondence School assignments. Thirteen classes completed questionnaires, and 9 of these classes involving 7 teachers and 172 students were used in this study. In addition, 42 undirected students completed questionnaires.

This school appeared to have fostered in its students a positive attitude towards the library. Almost three-quarters of them, compared with an average of half for all nine schools, thought it desirable to learn how to use encyclopedias. Almost half, as against the survey average of 36 percent, considered newspapers were important. Finally, a high 72 percent considered that they achieved their objectives compared with a survey average of 64 percent.

It was reported that weekly issues came to about 1,600; however, the actual number may have been rather fewer.

Of all the libraries studied this one was outstanding in the way in which it was used. The fact that the teacher-librarian was willing to spend long hours on this aspect of his work was probably a

considerable help, but also significant was the confidence of the teachers in general concerning their ability to make good use of the library. Their interest and concern was shown by their willingness to make comments about the use of their own school library, which contrasted with the apparent lack of interest in some other schools.

School 9

It is a vital part of the English course — to foster a love of books and an ability to use a library.

A Forms I-VII independent girls' school, planning for integration with the state system, School 9 had a roll of a little over 500, with approximately 100 at the intermediate level.

The library was housed in a small prefabricated building. Although unprepossessing externally, fresh white paint, bright curtains and pot plants had done something to hide internal inadequacies such as the lack of appropriate tables and chairs and the unpleasantly cramped floor space, especially around the reference collection and issue desk.

The catalogue was in excellent condition. Some years ago a fire in the library resulted in the loss of a number of books, and water damage to the rest. Every book in the collection then had to be assessed and, at the end of the exercise, the catalogue was retyped, following School Library Service guidelines. Unfortunately, the only available space for this catalogue was in the unheated foyer. However, the work done should be invaluable when, as part of the integration planning, the library is moved into a new building.

The library's annual budget was $2,000. Teaching staff co-operated in book selection. The School Library Service *Review* was regarded as a valuable tool for selection, but other journals that carried reviews were also studied, as were the *Listener* and daily papers. The reference collection was adequate for the size of the school, and the full-time presence of a skilled professional enabled the students to find answers to almost all of their queries on the spot or, failing that, to be assisted in finding the information elsewhere. A good range of periodicals, including the *Listener, Consumer, New Internationalist* and *Time* was displayed in the entrance foyer.

The librarian, who was both a trained teacher and a trained librarian, had sole responsibility for the library. Officially her hours in the library were 17½, but she was there throughout the school day, with the exception of a 30-minute break for lunch.

Throughout the school, library skills were the responsibility of the librarian. Large numbers of eager pupil librarians were trained to do rather more than issue books: they worked in groups, each with an assigned task such as overdue books. Two elective groups were taught by the librarian: in one, which was an alternative to sport, the girls helped with practical matters, such as covering books. In the other, a third form group, the girls were given extended training in library skills, such as relating the subject index to the catalogue, finding out what goes on the catalogue cards, and how that information is obtained, learning rules for filing catalogue cards, and so on. An attractive book was used as a basis for the course.[8]

Class teachers gave guidance in book selection, teachers visited the library frequently, and in the lunch-hours a teacher was always present to supervise the work of the pupil librarians with issues and shelving, leaving the librarian free to give personal assistance to borrowers. Since space was very limited, classes were not regularly scheduled in the library. One group of Form I students, however, talked about what they had read and were planning to read, and also discussed with their teacher a proposed visit to the School Library Service. The most significant aspect of this library period was the way their teacher joined in the discussion of the children's reading in a way which showed she, too, had read the books.

In spite of the lack of facilities for class use, there was a steady stream of users, both staff and students coming with specific needs, and seniors for study periods. The library was warm and cheerful on wintry days, and the librarian welcoming and helpful. Over 500 books were issued a week, and the librarian commented that the number had increased steadily over the previous few years. Good use was made of the School Library Service resources to supplement the school's own stock, which was not large enough to meet this level of demand.

It is perhaps not surprising that analysis of the questionnaire responses reveals that the students at this school had a very positive image of their library and its value to them. They gave the highest

rating of any group to displays of new books with nearly a quarter stating that they were 'very important' (the survey average was 17 percent) and only 19 percent (compared with the survey average of 24 percent) indicating that they were 'not important'. Apart from a small group (just under 10 percent), all the students considered that the librarian was 'very important', compared with the survey average of 56 percent. All the students thought that what they learned about their school library would be valuable in years to come. Four-fifths achieved their declared objectives, compared with the survey average of 64 percent; and 85 percent of those who visited the library alone came at least once a fortnight. This last figure may seem unusually large, but it can be explained by the wish of the pupils to visit the library on their own to make up for the lack of opportunities to go with their classes.

At the time the school was visited, discussion was taking place about what the school's staffing entitlement would be when it was integrated with the state system. It seemed clear that the post of librarian as it existed then would be in jeopardy. In spite of the extreme difficulties caused by the lack of space and inadequate furnishings, the students at the school were very fortunate to have the services of a devoted and knowledgeable librarian.

3 Teachers and Teaching

The teachers

The teachers who distributed questionnaires to students using the library were also asked to answer one themselves. While the main purpose of this procedure was to identify the class later, it was also hoped to discover whether the intentions of the teachers and the intentions of the students in their classes were connected in any way. Predictably, perhaps, the more specific the teacher's intention for her or his class the more clearly the students were able to define their own purpose.

Teachers' reasons for visiting the library with their classes varied from the vaguely defined to the very specific. For English teachers, aims beyond exchanging books, exposing students to books, or similar general objectives were rare. Language and science teachers, on the other hand, tended to have clearly defined aims, which the students were aware of before they reached the library, and which the students expressed in answers that were almost identical. These teachers had prepared questions which required wide use of reference books, and their classes, in a pleasantly busy and purposeful atmosphere, achieved the highest degree of satisfaction in completing the tasks set.

Of all the English classes observed in the nine survey schools and two pilot schools, the one where both teacher and students had the greatest sense of time well spent was a tightly structured hour: so many minutes for book selection, which the teacher helped students with; discussion of reading records and chasing up overdues; some reading aloud by the teacher; so many minutes of silent reading, when the teacher sat and read too and, finally, a quick

revision of some skills. According to this teacher, for her it was one of the hardest lessons of the week. That lesson contrasted sharply with another in which repeating fifth form students might just as well have stayed in the classroom for all the use they made of the library books or services. During it, the teacher spent most of the time marking work by another class, then for some 10 to 15 minutes left the library altogether. Lack of structure for the period may have been the reason why almost a third (30 percent) of the 848 students in English classes claimed that they had not achieved their objectives while in the library. As one teacher put it, 'it is important to structure lessons so they don't degenerate into being just a "free period" where children spend time looking at pictures or doing homework'.

Most of the teachers who made comments on their questionnaire forms had a great deal of praise for their libraries. But not all: some mentioned the lack of appropriate books; others argued that all resources should be brought under the control of the library; and others again considered that human resources were inadequate. At School 8, for example, teachers said the library was 'grossly understaffed, particularly in view of current thinking of the library as a resource centre' and was 'hampered by lack of staff to provide aid beyond books, such as the cataloguing and storage of software'.

Discipline was cited as a problem which often kept classes away from the library or made their visits very brief; it was a realistic teacher who commented: 'One has all sorts of high ideals, but some classes are very difficult to manage in the library.' Many teachers promise unruly classes a library visit as an incentive to good behaviour. Poorly motivated students are more difficult to supervise in less formal environments, and library periods can certainly be very difficult for teachers with large groups of badly behaved students. Relieving teachers appeared to have difficulties keeping the students busy and quiet, especially in one school (School 2), where the teachers were of the view that the library period had no relevance to their teaching.

It is unusual to see a teacher in the library without a class. Teachers do not appear to regard themselves as users, with the exception of one of the rural schools where the library assistant made a point of informing teachers about new books likely to interest them. During the period of this study it was even rarer to

see a teacher carrying out research in the library — using a dictionary or an encyclopedia, consulting an atlas, or even reading periodicals or newspapers. Considering that library programmes are designed to encourage students to accept libraries as non-threatening, pleasant tools with which to improve the whole of life, where there is a resource person willing to explain mysteries, answer problems, and point students in the direction of self-sufficiency, it is a pity that the models that teachers exhibit are not themselves more positive. As some of them seem to lack the very confidence they are trying to instil in their students, one suspects that a full-time librarian-teacher, if ever such a person were appointed, could profitably conduct lessons in library skills for staff as well as for students. Of course teachers have access to many other resources when preparing work. But it was not unusual to find that library assignments were set without the teacher first checking that the school library had the necessary material for the students' use.

The classes seen in the library

Classes seen in the libraries were, not surprisingly, mainly English, as Table 3 shows. Several teachers commented that, in their view, the library should not be seen as the sole preserve of the English Department.

In some schools there appeared to have been little effort to encourage other subject teachers to bring classes to the library, while in others the encouragement had fallen on deaf ears. The Latin, French and Japanese classes that were seen were all in the same school; the science, history and social studies classes that were seen were also all in one school; the geography class was in one other, and the reading/library electives in two. In four of the nine schools no classes other than English were seen.

Over 80 classes were seen in the nine schools. Instances of teachers helping individual members of these classes to locate books or use reference books were few — only 18 — and in only four cases did teachers discuss books with the whole class. In fewer than 10 percent of these classes was some prepared form of library instruction given. Many teachers in those schools which had weekly half-hour library periods wanted to do more formal work in

Table 3 *Library use by subjects*

Subject	Students N	Students %
English	848	63.0
Reading/Elective	53	3.9
Science	42	3.2
Social Studies	21	1.6
History	20	1.5
Latin	19	1.4
French	15	1.1
Geography	15	1.1
Japanese	14	1.0
Undirected	298	22.2
Total	1,345	100.0

the library, but ran out of time simply because checking for overdue books, and allowing the students to select and check out their new books, took up the whole period. Could not these schools have settled for hour-long periods with a fortnightly timetable?

The students themselves, as judged by their responses to the question, 'What do you think you should learn about the library?', showed that they at least had a realistic view of their needs.

Nevertheless, little time seemed to be devoted to specific

Table 4 *Students' views on what they needed to learn about the library*

How to	Percentage agreeing
Find books on particular subjects	83.1
Use the card catalogue	70.4
Use encyclopedias	51.1
Understand classification	40.1
Find a good story	39.9
Nothing	3.7
Other: 'to be quiet'	2.2
'how the library runs'	0.9

teaching of these skills, and in many cases little opportunity was provided for students to learn through experience.

Overwhelmingly the students felt that they needed to learn where to find books for particular subjects which they might be studying in class or which might help them with a leisure interest. An understanding of the catalogue, the key to this skill of finding books, was also rated highly, while coming to grips with the classification system and finding fiction were seen as significantly less worthwhile areas for tuition.

Developing programmes in library skills

> *The problem of how students develop constructive attitudes and the ability to utilize library services depends largely on the facility (i.e., the school) and the importance which the library programme holds in the minds of the educational powers that be.*[10]

Though written in 1972 about junior high schools in the state of Oregon, USA, these words by Golden V. Adams apply equally to New Zealand in the 1980s. Adams concluded that skill in using reference books was definitely increased if students took a formal library science class. Such courses already exist in New Zealand but are not widely adopted. For example, a library course devised by the School Library Service for Ellesmere College, a Forms I to VII school in Canterbury, has units for every level in the school. It is designed for a 10-lesson year and covers basic library skills in three sections: Basic, for Forms I-III, Revision for Form IV, and Advanced for Forms V-VII. Each lesson is outlined, leaving the teacher to plan specific exercises, and there is ample provision for practical work. In Form VI the emphasis is on research skills and presentation; in Form VII individual research projects are suggested, to be carried out unsupervised, resulting in a formal report, complete with bibliography, index and footnotes. Clearly such an assignment could apply to topics studied for any subect. At the time of writing, this course, developed for implementation in 1980, had been used only with Form I students.*

* Some more recently produced resource material is included in the bibliography.

Schools could use in-service time for all teachers to plan a library syllabus together, to develop a comprehensive library programme for every level. However, workbooks have been produced before, used, and then discarded. Teachers' desires to express individuality, combined with the lack of a specific prescription, make it unlikely that any one scheme will meet favour in more than a smattering of schools.

Most of the schools in the survey showed some unease about the teaching of library skills. A great number of 'if onlys' and 'buts' were expressed by both teachers and library assistants; for example, 'If there were more time', and 'I would like to do more, but . . .' Individual teachers made these remarks about their own teaching schemes, however. It seemed that very few schools attempted a school-wide programme.

School 2, it will be recalled, had devised such an across-the-curriculum scheme; on the principle that library skills are relevant to all subjects, time was taken from all subjects other than English for a comprehensive skills programme. Unfortunately, several factors contributed to the failure of this plan: there was no one person to coordinate the library activities, because the library assistant was not involved; the worksheets were dreary, unattractive photocopies of pages assembled from a variety of sources; some of the non-English teachers resented giving up their class time for what they still perceived as English teaching (this in turn produced negative responses in students); and, finally, teachers who were not skilled library users felt inadequate when asked to guide students through such a programme.

This last point — teachers' feelings that they lack appropriate knowledge — is the strongest argument in favour of having library assistants who *are* competent to teach skills. Some of them are willing to do so, but are not given the opportunity beyond the three or four periods usually available to introduce third formers to the rudiments of library use. An additional problem is that, in general, library assistants are uneasy about tackling teaching in front of teachers. In three of the schools surveyed, the library assistants did have teacher training, and these were the only ones who, confident in the teaching role, sought access to groups of students beyond the orientation periods.

Finding reliable information in the catalogue should be child's play.

At the heart of the problem is the large number of teachers who see no reason to integrate library skills with their classroom instruction. When teachers see no 'need' for students to use the library most students will see no need either . . . The positive experience they should have in using a variety of informational resources, so that they have to learn how to select the right kind of tool for the appropriate purpose, simply never occurs even though the library resources have been purchased to support the entire curriculum.[9]

This comment was made not about New Zealand school libraries, though it could well have been, but about 39 schools in the state of Massachusetts, studied by Joyce Merriam, and reported on in 1979. She was concerned with the difficulties encountered by students in making the transition from high school to tertiary libraries, and her observations focused on the problems affecting the use of the skills programmes, such as teacher apathy, fragmented instruction, lack of continuing instruction, and student confusion.

In New Zealand there is an assumption that all students undertaking tertiary education will know how to use a library. Secondary school libraries have existed for some time, and money has been spent, often very generously, in providing good buildings and comprehensive collections of books. However, it appears that the best way of using these facilities is not being taught in any consistent fashion as part of the English or any other syllabus. It is quite possible for students to leave the seventh form and enter university without a clear idea of how to use a single-volume reference work, and to be totally confused when confronted with 26 volumes.

There is a wide range of activities in the curriculum which could be centred in the library, giving students opportunities to use it in order to broaden their perceptions of a number of subjects. That there are many hours when there are no classes in the libraries surveyed indicates that teachers are unaware of these possibilities. This fact, together with an apparently haphazard approach to the teaching of library skills, results in a failure to reach all, or even the more able, students. Yet teachers would surely agree that revision and reinforcing of skills is necessary in any other subject of school study, and that a common core is essential for those subjects considered basic to further education.

Even in those schools which attempted to provide a programme

of formal library instruction, the scheme was almost invariably a patchwork affair, with bits and pieces taken from a variety of sources and photocopied. Students are unlikely to be convinced that library skills are especially worthy of their attention if the teaching materials used are not attractively presented. Further, instruction in the use of the library seemed to be unrelated to other subjects studied by the pupils, and to the curriculum needs of the New Zealand school. There was a practical difficulty here, too, in that there seemed to be no readily apparent way of ensuring that every class would be adequately taught. The expectation that a programme of library skills could be used after the fourth form was very rare, although most teachers claimed to spend a little time in revision before School Certificate. At one school the researcher observed a class of fifth formers receiving library instruction, and in another school one class of sixth formers, but such instances were exceptional. No evidence was available to suggest that seventh formers at any school received formal instruction in using libraries. Individual teachers of senior students, perhaps, had policies for the style in which research should be presented, but in the classes observed no instruction was given in the use of reference books, such as year-books and indexes, or in the compilation of bibliographies.

4 The Students

The students using the libraries were, as might be expected, not all enthusiastic about reading for leisure, or for study. In some schools the questionnaire was treated with great seriousness, while, in others, it appeared that there was too great a desire to please for the answers to be of any real value. There were also instances of a discernible desire to shock, but the few questionnaires in this category were destroyed.

Although the questionnaire was designed to be simple to administer and complete, it was sometimes necessary to clarify the appropriate procedures. Students were asked to fill in the first page immediately, and to answer the last question (on the reverse side) shortly before they left the library. It was to be expected that several questionnaires would be incorrectly completed. However, a reasonable number of students from each level surveyed finally completed questionnaires, and some of their responses revealed how libraries were used in secondary schools.

A student from School 3, who provided detailed comments on the need for more specialized reading, was exceptional. She asked for 'more books to open people's minds on current issues, or helpful to future life, e.g., books on feminism, trade unions, human rights, national issues, politics (especially in election year), the law, the economy'. Although many students suggested that a variety of things could be added to their library, for example, computers, a clock, coffee, posters, a stereo, and a study-room, no other students took the opportunity to write such a long and specific list of suggestions.

Of the 1,345 students surveyed, there were slightly more girls than boys. There were more girls, for example, in the Form I sample

(because there was a single-sex Forms I to VII school with no boys' counterpart), and more boys in the Form VI sample. However, there were no significant differences in the answers on the basis of sex.

Of the total completing questionnaires, 1,042 were surveyed in classes. The remainder did not necessarily come to the library of their own volition, since in some schools the library served an additional role as a study-room. Of the 61 students with study periods at least some were compelled to work in the library even though they were not making use of any of the library's special facilities. A quarter of the 155 sixth formers came from choice, while over half of the 54 seventh formers chose to come to the library. Very few of these senior students had come to use library books, as can be seen from Table 5.

Table 5 *Activities students intended to carry out in the library*

Activities	Form 1 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	6 %	7 %	All levels %
Nothing	-	2.6	4.8	5.4	1.4	3.7	3.9
Borrow and return	25.6	38.4	32.7	28.8	21.0	9.3	30.7
Browse	25.6	27.5	23.7	27.6	23.8	20.4	25.6
Assignment	-	5.5	12.1	8.3	-	-	7.4
Reference and research (using library books)	48.8	13.3	18.0	15.6	20.3	16.7	17.3
Homework and study	-	12.4	6.4	11.0	32.2	44.4	12.9
Read magazines and newspapers	-	0.3	2.4	3.4	1.4	5.6	2.1
Totals	43	346	456	410	143	54	1,452

Note: The totals include first and second choices with respect to the activities intended.

The majority of library users were third, fourth and fifth formers, with a marked tailing off beyond the fifth form.

In the two rural schools a number of senior students used the library as a room in which to do Correspondence School assignments. Some of the 79 sixth formers and 45 seventh formers (in-

Table 6 *Number of students using the library by class level*

Class	N	%
Form 1	33	2.5
Form 3	300	22.3
Form 4	401	29.8
Form 5	402	29.9
Form 6	155	11.5
Form 7	54	4.0
Total	1,345	100.0

cluded as 'undirected', because they were not with a class) were therefore in the library because the school had no other place where they could work.

The ratings accorded various facilities by the students in answer to Question 4 provided the most interesting material of the questionnaire. Sixty percent of all the students stated that they thought the card catalogue was 'very important', and a further 36 percent that it was 'quite important'. However, analysis of these figures did not reveal any correlation with the state of the school's catalogue, as might have been expected. Nor did level or subject seem to be important; and, although only 3.2 percent thought the catalogue

Some students find the library confusing. It helps if it is efficiently arranged and tidy without being stark.

was 'not important', few students were seen to consult the catalogues unless specifically directed to them by class teachers.

It is interesting to note, in connection with the use of catalogues, a study made at San Jose State University by Jo Bell Whitlatch and Karen Kieffer. Using a questionnaire to collect data on why students failed to find the information they sought, they found that 'results indicated that more students could benefit from a knowledge of the basics of library use . . . The studies revealed that 42 percent of the items that individuals listed as not found in the card catalogue were in the card catalogue and could have been located by a user who possessed basic catalogue use skills.'[11] The authors' suggested remedies were more individualized instruction with the catalogues, student assistants to teach basic elements of usage, and more signposts.

The ratings for reference books produced almost identical figures to those for the catalogues, but there were some interesting variations among class levels. While 60 percent of the total thought reference books were 'very important', the averages by level ranged from 56 percent of fourth formers to 83 percent of seventh formers; and by subject from 55 percent of English students to 95 percent of Latin students.

School 9, it may be recalled, had the most inadequate furnishings of any of the libraries. Students might have been expected to register some degree of protest at the conditions but, probably because the librarian saw to it that the services offered compensated for the lack of comfort, only 15 percent thought desks and chairs were 'very important', 42 percent 'quite important' and 40 percent 'not important'. This contrasted with the average for all students of 35 percent, 42 percent and 23 percent respectively.

Displays of new books were not regarded as having great value, with only 17 percent of students according them the status 'very important'. School 2 gave the lowest rating to the importance of book displays (9 percent 'very important', 59 percent 'quite important' and 31 percent 'not important'), while the highest rating was given by School 9 (22 percent 'very important', 54 percent 'quite important' and 19 percent 'not important'). It is interesting to recall in connection with these figures that School 2 had a very low issue rate, estimated at 250 a week for a roll of 1100, while School 9 was issuing 500 books weekly to 500 students.

Newspapers and magazines were not considered particularly important, as only 12 percent of students regarded them as 'very important', and 36 percent as 'not important'. It is rather disturbing that English students should value periodical literature so little, and more so that only 5 percent of social studies students should consider newspapers 'very important', when such easily accessible material could play a useful role in their studies.

Photocopiers were rated most highly in those schools which had them in their library; School 2, where the copier was not working, had much the same ratings as other schools with functioning copiers.

Good signposting appeared important to student users. Only 11 percent considered them 'not important', with no substantial variation on this according to level, subject, or school.

The most significant parts of Question 4 were those about the importance of the 'librarian' and the class teachers. Students' responses may surprise some teachers.

It appears that the more active the library assistant is in promoting the library, the more important she is in the perceptions of the students. In School 9, for instance, where nearly all the students surveyed considered that the librarian was very important, the library assistant was very actively involved in teaching in the library.

It will be remembered that in School 7 the teacher-librarian had dual qualifications and both she and the head of English spent a

Table 7 *Students' perceptions of the librarian's role*

Group	Very Important %	Quite Important %	Not Important %
School 2	53	22	24
School 9	91	6	2
Form I	79	18	3
Form V	47	31	21
Form VII	69	24	7
English	51	29	19
Sample N	752	365	214

Table 8 *Students' perceptions of the teacher's function in the library*

Group	Very Important %	Quite Important %	Not Important %
School 4	5	20	69
School 7	15	32	48
Form I	33	52	12
Form VII	4	28	65
English	10	28	55

Note. Six percent of the students did not answer this question.

good deal of every lunch-hour in the library. Some of the students who responded were, or had been, taught by the teacher-librarian.

While most of the Form I students came to the library with a teacher, the reverse was true of seventh formers: only nine of the 54 were with a class teacher.

Although English teachers normally have a greater involvement in the library than other teachers and regularly teach there, ratings by students in English classes were very close to the average, as were their ratings of the library assistant (see Table 7).

When asked whether they thought their learning about the school library would be useful when they left school, 68 percent of the students answered 'Yes', perhaps a rather low number when the affirmative answers of all the students at School 9, and 82 percent of all the seventh formers, are taken into consideration. Of the 20 history students, all of whom were in Form 5, just over one-third (35 percent) answered this question in the affirmative. Since this is a small and unrepresentative sample of history students, this result may be relatively insignificant. But even with the considerably larger number studying English (848) only 61 percent regarded their learning about the school library as likely to be beneficial in the future. At a time when educationists are becoming increasingly concerned about the creative use of leisure, particular note should be taken of the finding that only two-thirds of students appear to consider libraries as one of their principal future resources.

Students were also asked how often they visited the library alone or with a class and, out of the total of 1,345 who responded, just over half (58 percent) stated that they went to the library alone at

Reference work is made easier if general encyclopedic works and specialist books, such as dictionaries, atlases and yearbooks are arranged together, close to a table where they may be consulted.

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least once a fortnight, and 81 percent went as often with a class. However, 11 percent of sixth formers and 46 percent of the seventh formers replied that they never visited with a class. Since there were probably others in the school who did not come to the library at all, and therefore did not participate in the survey, these figures cannot be said to describe the school population as a whole.

As outlined, students were asked to put the questionnaires aside, after filling in the first page, until near the end of their visit, when an assessment was made of whether they had achieved their objectives. Two-thirds of the students claimed that they had been successful, though students at School 8 (72 percent) and School 9 (81 percent) seemed more satisfied than the rest. In School 8, science students worked on well-planned research assignments with close supervision from their teachers, while School 9 had a librarian who was very concerned to help all students. Students at School 3 may have been rather more satisfied with their time in the library (as it was, 60 percent were) had it not been for the frustrations of the French class whose teacher had not made advance arrangements with the library assistant to ensure that there were sufficient books for their needs. Those who did not achieve their stated goals gave as reasons the unavailability of the required books, and their friends' talking. Noise was less frequently cited as a reason for failure, and lack of help was seldom mentioned as affecting achievement.

By and large, students treated the questionnaire seriously, especially those who were undirected. Although every teacher was supposed to have been informed in advance of the researcher's visits, many had either not been told or had forgotten. Where this occurred, 8 or 10 minutes of their class time had to be arranged for completing the forms. Most teachers were extremely gracious about this, though in some cases there was a little difficulty about the manner in which the survey was presented to the students.

In sum, senior students were not using the library for research as much as might have been expected. Where the library assistant was in contact with students, the students' attitudes were more positive. These findings may not be particularly surprising; however, the comparative importance of the library assistant and class teacher was not entirely expected, nor was the failure of so many students to appreciate the value, for the future, of learning about their libraries.

5 The Library Assistants

Although the position of the library assistants has been touched on under other headings, it might be helpful to consider their role more fully at this point. Unlike other English-speaking countries, New Zealand does not have a professional body of school librarians. Library assistants are not required to have professional training for employment. Increasing numbers do have qualifications as a result of participating in the Library Studies Certificate course in Wellington, but attending this course can involve considerable personal and financial sacrifice. Moreover, as there is no provision for the payment of relieving staff, schools also are disadvantaged should their library assistants take time off for study.

There is no career structure in school library work, so little external incentive exists for a library assistant, once in a position, to continue developing professionally. The New Zealand Library Association has encouraged library assistants to participate in its activities as representatives of their schools or as personal members, but comparatively few take advantage of this opportunity. In addition, there is a good deal of insecurity at present for library assistants: falling school rolls can result in a reduction of working hours, with a consequent decline in income.

The library assistant works a great deal of her time in isolation from the rest of the school staff. There is a necessary physical isolation, especially when the library is situated on the perimeter of the school buildings, but this is often increased by the fact that teachers seldom visit the libraries unless they are obliged to do so with a class. And there is also a professional isolation, epitomized in school magazines where it is usual for the library assistant, whether qualified or not, to be listed after the part-time teachers,

the visiting teachers, the secretaries and so on, and to appear near the bottom of the list with groundsmen, gardeners and caretakers. In some schools, library assistants are welcomed in the staffroom for morning tea, but excluded from 'academic' occasions such as prizegivings. In other schools the isolation is self-inflicted; library assistants may choose not to go into the staffroom at all. That they should adopt such an attitude in the first place sits rather oddly with their helping function — after all they are appointed to positions where cooperation and an outgoing manner are very important. Perhaps employers should consider whether such exclusive ways are acceptable or not, and try to encourage librarians to participate more fully. Be that as it may, those library assistants who regularly spend a few minutes a day in contact with the whole teaching staff regard such contact as most important in promoting awareness of the library.

Working conditions are often difficult for library assistants. For example, stress is placed on them when they are faced with unruly students. Lacking real authority, and frequently working in the absence of any teacher through lunch-hours when 80-100 or more students have to be supervised, library assistants are able to do little more than police the library, when ideally they should be free to assist students. Class times can also be very distressing if a teacher turns a blind eye and deaf ear to behaviour which would not be tolerated by the library assistant if she were in charge.

Often, too, the physical environment is not well-planned or furnished and, in terms of convenience and comfort, is sometimes totally inadequate. Workrooms are frequently cramped, and often lack running hot water and telephones, tea-making and toilet facilities, even though the libraries are a considerable distance from staffrooms. Schools 6 and 9 were clearly the worst in these respects, but the new buildings should, it is hoped, be better designed. Schools 2 and 3 also had poorly planned workrooms, while School 4 had a large workroom separated from the office by the equivalent of two classroom lengths. School 7, with an S68 plan, which allows the workroom to be placed in any corner of the building, has sited its workroom on the south-west corner of the library, exposed to the coldest winter weather and facing away from the rest of the school, thus increasing the sense of isolation for the library assistant. At Schools 1, 3 and 4, where existing classrooms have been converted

into libraries in central parts of the school and there is a greater sense of being in touch with the life of the school, the library assistants appeared to be more involved in school activities.

In the staffing of the school library, the library assistant is a more constant factor than the teacher-librarian. Although, officially, she should be working under his guidance, and in terms of status and remuneration she is on a lower level than the most junior teacher, she tends to remain in her position longer than the teacher-librarian does in his, and often will initiate a succession of teacher-librarians into learning the necessary skills. She spends more time in the library than any other staff member, is more accessible to the students and, regardless of her qualifications, is deferred to by them as the person in charge.

The New Zealand school library system is dependent on the availability of women who seek part-time work, with a small remuneration, outside the home. There is unlikely to be a shortage of such women. That so many library assistants continue to function effectively, despite considerable difficulties, is the country's good fortune, but many of them would like to see changes to the system.

Lest it be thought that library assistants are critical of their working conditions, it should be emphasized that these comments are borne out by the researcher's observations. The library assistants like their work and accept the difficulties of their environment, in most cases giving the best service possible under the existing conditions. Perhaps this acceptance lies behind the perpetuation of the inadequacies of school libraries in New Zealand, as it most certainly does behind the efficiency and welcoming atmosphere of so many of them. The qualities of the library assistants were reflected both in the ratings accorded them by students, and in the warm comments made by many of the teachers.

6 The Typical Library

Is there a 'typical' library?

Although it was intended that the schools chosen for study be reasonably representative of the different types of secondary school in Canterbury, the survey was nevertheless restricted to a particular province where schools could well be considerably different in some respects from schools in other regions, especially in parts of the North Island. And even within Canterbury, where physical characteristics such as the building and the size and type of school were similar, the atmosphere of the library and the use to which it was put differed considerably from one school to another. When the project was initiated, such marked differences had not been anticipated; it had been thought that among the nine schools there would be more similarities than differences. The lack of prescribed standards and the official tolerance of inadequacies in design and service, however, mean that individual schools develop, or in some cases fail to develop, their own standards.

The two large co-educational city schools had the most in common, both in the non-standard design of the library building and in the use being made of it, but even in these schools support given to the curriculum differed quite markedly. On the basis of the nine schools observed, therefore, it is not possible to characterize the 'typical' library.

Buildings

Even within the state school system buildings can vary from a barely adequate amalgam of former classrooms, to the architectur-

ally uninspired box called the S68 plan, to grandiose structures reflecting a school's age and academic heritage. Facilities provided can range from the shabby, disorganized, and untidy to the well-managed, clean, tidy, and efficiently run — within budgetary limits and time allowances. It seemed that building design did not significantly affect the quality of the services available to the students.

At one end of the scale was a very grand building which was scarcely used, at the other a cramped prefabricated building, invitingly cheerful and giving a very good service within the limits imposed by the lack of space. Most, however, made do with poorly designed buildings, through using their resources imaginatively. Two libraries were housed in standard buildings, each in their different ways serving the needs of large numbers of students. Schools with makeshift library buildings, or ones adapted from existing classrooms, may not be able to provide carrels for private study, matching tables and chairs, comfortable armchairs or a co-ordinated colour scheme; these buildings challenge the staff to make material considerations insignificant.

Stocks

It is difficult to generalize about the book stocks in the nine libraries. Differences arising from the type of school and its size were to be expected. However, there were also considerable differences in the basic reference collections. General encyclopedias, such as *World Book* and *Britannica*, were readily available, but rarer were specialist reference books to which sixth and seventh formers especially needed ready access. Since it was not part of the present study to check the reference titles held (that has been done by Fenwick) a visual check of the range and age of the books was undertaken, and the ease of finding those available ascertained.

It was noted that decisions about where to shelve subject reference books were based more on poor (or non-existent) design of fittings than on user-centred policy. For example, there were few schools able to have all the general reference books together in an area especially designed for them; the outsize books might all be together, but standard-sized ones would more often be on shelves with the borrowing collection.

Periodicals on specialist subjects are usually too expensive for

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New Zealand school libraries, and are not required for teaching in quite the same way as, for example, in the United States, where a senior student would be expected to include references to the most recent writings on an assigned topic. In this country it appears that libraries do not make great efforts to introduce a wider range of periodicals for staff as well as students.

The collections of most of the libraries, when the survey was initiated, were already beginning to reflect changes in economic circumstances. On the whole, the general stocks were reasonably appropriate, but becoming shabby and, worse, outdated. As for the literature sections, it appeared that at most schools there had been a conscious decision not to purchase for the library books which might be presumed to be in departmental collections. However, this does result in the absence from the library's shelves of some of the books which students might reasonably expect to find there such as, for example, a fair-sized selection of the work of New Zealand writers of poetry, drama and novels.

The abler senior students were not well catered for in the fiction collections, nor did there seem to be much attention paid in the non-fiction collections to contemporary issues such as land rights, conservation, women's affairs or the nuclear debate. It may be that, in the desire to attract the 13- and 14-year-olds into the library to become 'hooked on books', the emphasis has been too much on buying books likely to appeal to this age group. The lack of titles of interest to the older, more sophisticated, age group may in part account for the tendency reported for sixth and seventh form students to assert that they 'do not have time to read'. Pressure of work is given as the reason for this, but it is clear that, if they *wanted* to read for *recreation* they would find time to do so, just as they can find time for other recreational activities.

There was little indication that minority groups were being considered when books were purchased. Limited time and a curtailed budget make bargain basement book selection very tempting, but this should be offset with some study of the needs of *all* the student users. It was surprising to hear students in a school which had a very active Maori club complain that their library had no books on Maori or by Maori writers — a claim confirmed by a check of the catalogue.

Other facilities

Non-book material was almost non-existent in the libraries visited. Only one school had a fully up-to-date vertical file, equipped with issue cards so that a whole folder could be borrowed. In another school the vertical file did not seem to have had anything added to it for a number of years. Out-of-date material was rarely removed from the files.

None of the schools had audio-visual software available for borrowers, and none had listening, let alone viewing, facilities in the libraries. There were no overhead projectors, slide projectors or screens, yet, at the time, there were at least two commercial library skills programmes available with transparencies for OHP viewing. Some libraries had photocopiers for the use of staff and students, and when these were in working order they were used a great deal. Where most libraries are now offering at least a small range of non-print material, *school* libraries were equated with books only. When non-print material was mentioned it was invariably interpreted as audio-cassettes; none of the libraries offered any prospect of lending pictures, maps, transparencies, slides, video-cassettes and so on to teachers and senior students, even in a limited way.

Management

The whole question of management of school libraries appeared to be treated in a somewhat haphazard way. There was a lack of long-term objectives, of setting goals for the future. Finance is almost certainly a factor in this; staffing is another; there is no person with authority and time to plan further ahead than the current year. The visits to the nine Canterbury school libraries emphasized that successful use of their facilities depends on an imaginative and assertive person assuming responsibility for the management of the library. It is not particularly important whether such a person is the teacher-librarian or the library assistant, or even a person with another title yet to be invented; but it is important, indeed essential, that at least one dynamic personality define an acceptable library policy based on professional knowledge of librarianship, curriculum requirements and student needs,

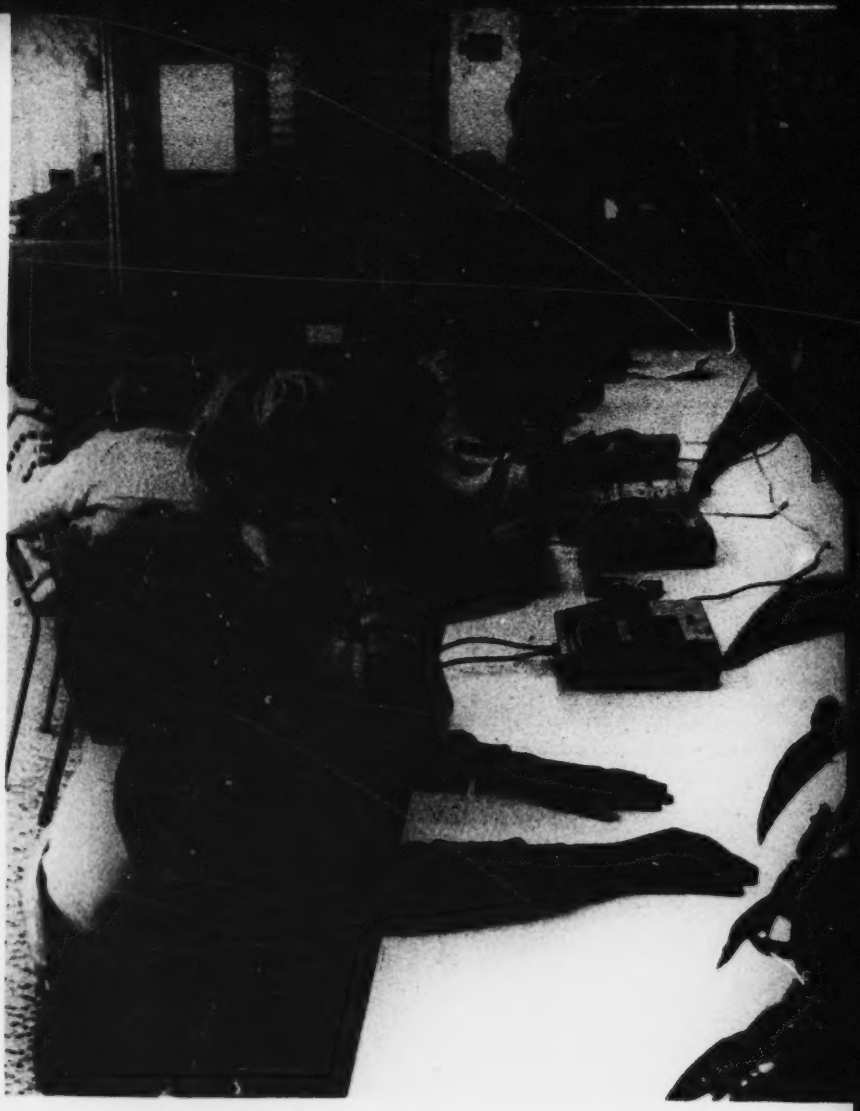
and promote it throughout the school.

Staff may be appointed for library duties who have little or no experience or qualifications, and in most cases there appears to be no expectation that this deficiency should be remedied.

Eleven years ago a survey of students in Colorado reported these findings: 'Secondary students most frequently cited helpful personnel as a very important factor'[12] and 'Secondary students were asked about improvements they would suggest for their library. The most frequently mentioned improvement concerned staff.'[13] Not surprisingly, students in the nine schools in the present survey accorded a high rating to the librarian, with over half (56 percent) rating her 'very important', and only 16 percent 'not important'. Those students who were not accompanied to the library by a teacher gave an even higher rating than the average (67 percent 'very important', only 12 percent 'not important'). The Colorado students considered the librarian more important than the surroundings, convenient hours and ease of access. The Canterbury students thought that the librarian was as important as the card catalogue and the reference books, and more important than desks and chairs, a photocopier, and their teachers.

The library assistants revealed a strong element of dedication to their work and most had good relationships with all the users. They often had to work in unattractive places. In some schools workrooms were cramped, cold, poorly positioned for sun or outlook, and in several others they were remote from staffrooms and other facilities. An as yet unpublished guide to the management of school libraries, drafted by the Department of Education, highlights, with its title, the lowly status of school librarians: *Hey, Mrs Thing* may well touch some tender spots. The acceptance by library assistants of some of the difficulties outlined in this report, while creditable, makes their perpetuation possible. If the letter of the Departmental regulations were observed, school libraries might well be unmanageable; the library assistants, being efficient and welcoming, make the libraries work, and the ratings of students and comments of teachers indicate their appreciation of this.

The library assistants were frequently faced with decisions about how best to use their limited time and had to do this in accordance with their competencies. Sadly, the catalogue was one area which tended to be neglected, and it is a very daunting task



None of the schools in the survey had audio-visual software available in the library. The facilities that enabled these Form III students to listen to a recorded short story would seem to be exceptional.

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trying to correct the results of such neglect. What usually happens is that, often with help from the School Library Service, the worst errors are eliminated, but the rest remains to frustrate future generations. The school which had the most reliable up-to-date catalogue, with cards set out in a uniform way, had benefited from employing a library assistant who trained as a librarian.

Library assistants can experience a tension between their roles as both supervisor and helper or guide, particularly if the library becomes very busy. Policy matters, however, are the responsibility of the teacher-librarian, not of the library assistant. If the assistant's hours do not allow for thoroughness in technical matters, how much less do the few hours available for the teacher-librarian allow for the development of a flourishing library? Many of them are both conscientious and imaginative, but only one of those surveyed was free to spend the whole of every lunch-hour in the library. All expressed dissatisfaction with their time allocation, and claimed they could do better for the library if they could give it priority. The teacher-librarian is usually male, except for girls' schools; generally, he is seeking to improve his career by taking on the responsibility of the library and, as Fenwick showed, he is unlikely to remain in the position for more than three years. Competing demands, too, such as sport, drama, debating or other clubs, are often at the expense of the library position and diminish the time available for library supervision. Students are, therefore, more likely to seek help from the library assistant than from the teacher-librarian.

Student helpers

All of the libraries were dependent to some degree on student librarians to do much of the routine work at the issue desk, shelving books or repairing them. In one school a junior student with no particular skill but plenty of enthusiasm was entrusted with typing the catalogue cards (this was the school which most needed work on its catalogue). Other schools employed students for the usual non-professional tasks, and at School 9, in addition to these, they worked on overdue books, filing catalogue cards, and arranging displays of books and periodicals — but all under the close supervi-

sion of the librarian. Most of this work is done in the lunch-hours, when student librarians are generally allowed to eat their lunches in the library, staying on, in some cases, to attend to their library work. As a result of their experience as student librarians, many become quite competent library users. However, the work pattern may be extremely erratic, subject as it is to alteration for examinations, sports fixtures and so on. This means that the library assistant cannot count on having the assistance of student helpers whenever she needs it.

School Library Service

The School Library Service provides a valuable support system for those schools which seek it, and most schools in the survey made use of this service, with both teachers and librarians requesting loans fairly regularly. Advisory services are not as widely used, partly because of time and distance, and not all schools seemed to make use of the service's *Review* when selecting books for purchase. Officers of the service are not in a position to offer more than

Students enjoy issuing books, but some form of checking by the library assistant or class teacher is generally necessary.

guidance, but even this must be assessed in the context of a school policy which takes into account many factors unguessed at by outsiders. It is not enough to summon an adviser to help straighten out problems with the catalogue or the issue system, and then to assume that the library will thereafter function smoothly.

Other considerations

Many schools in Britain, Canada and the United States benefit from bulk buying, cataloguing and distribution of books to the schools by regional education authorities. A system of this kind in New Zealand would ease the work load of library assistants and free them to spend more time 'selling' the library to the students.

However, some caution should be observed when trying to promote wider use of the library. No longer does one expect to see large 'silence' signs whenever one enters a library; nevertheless in schools, as in public libraries, planners need to think carefully before encouraging all and sundry to use the library at all times. Perhaps the needs of the students would be better served by having specially designated 'quiet times' — minutes or hours, when only those reading silently would be allowed in the library. The number of students who indicated that they did not achieve their objectives because 'some friends came in and we talked' was relatively high (11 percent of the total sample) and there were a number who complained of the noise in their library.

Library skills

Resources for teaching library skills, or more general study skills, were comparatively few. Some schools had flow diagrams to help students find books, others had Dewey charts displayed. But only one school had a resource book for library skills lessons. At some schools the library staff had a hazy idea that the *PAT: Study Skills* tests were in use somewhere in the school, but in no school was the library being used to help with the development of skills after the tests were administered; and in most schools neither the library assistant nor the teacher-librarian knew such tests existed.

When this research was in its initial stages, a check was made of the number of students enrolled for Stage I classes at the University of Canterbury who had not collected their library borrowers' cards. At the end of the 1981 academic year, over 300 cards were still on file and half of these were for students of the humanities. This was not regarded by the university librarians as an unusual number, but it seemed to indicate a reluctance on the part of those recently at high school who would be most likely to use a library. Subsequent responses in the schools supported the suggestion that there is inadequate preparation at secondary school for tertiary library use.

Reading

Book lists and bibliographies were not promoted in the schools surveyed, apart from one school which had attractive fiction lists for the use of borrowers. Probably all the library assistants would have been willing to produce bibliographies if requested, but lack of time, and reluctance to spend it on something which might not be used, may have created an air of caution about offering such a service. In the same way, there was no indication that library assistants prepared selections of books for staff to take to classrooms. Only one school made it a regular practice for the library assistants to take selections of new books to the staffroom for displays.

In two of the schools the library assistant discussed leisure reading with the students, and in both the librarian had professional training as both teacher and librarian. Apart from School 9, where the librarian had a teaching role, no school gave the library assistant the opportunity to introduce new books to students in class time.

Book sharing and reading aloud were notably absent in most of the schools. There were only two examples of book sharing as a planned part of the library period; an animated discussion of an interesting variety of books was clearly part of the routine for a third form at School 3 and, at School 9, a Form I group discussed their reading with a teacher who had read all the books they mentioned, and then planned a visit to the School Library Service to borrow more books. In no case was there any reading aloud. Indeed, reading did not seem to be a popular activity in any of the libraries

surveyed: most senior students were preoccupied with homework or reading for study; juniors chatted about the latest Asterix books; or carried out research under the direction of the teacher; and teachers did not read in the libraries whether they were with a class or not — in fact, it was very unusual to see an unaccompanied teacher in a school library.

Use

Lunch-hours were the busiest times in the libraries, especially when the weather was bad. It was not unusual in the larger schools for 80 to 100 students to be in the library at any one time, although only about 30 of these would be there for the whole lunch period; the others would perhaps spend up to five minutes, but when they left more would arrive, so there was constant traffic through the doors. Staff generally had more than enough work to do in this time, both maintaining a reasonable degree of discipline and answering requests for help. In all the libraries there were a few (no more than 10) students engrossed in reading, and about the same number doing school work.

It is in the lunch-hours, too, that the student librarians do most of their work, and they require supervision. The half- to three-quarter-hour spell which is available for borrowing or study is also a social time for a great number of the students, including the librarians.

Timetables sometimes indicated heavy booking of class time which turned out to be deceptive. The failure of teachers to make use of their booked time is annoying for librarians, and wasteful of the resources. No school had a totally satisfactory timetable arrangement. The best example was in the large School 8 with alternating weeks, allowing hour-long periods. However, in some of the schools the use of the library was more consistent and widespread than in others.

A greater range of subjects was taught in the library of School 3 than in any other, resulting in heavy bookings. Here, most classes came at the appointed time, and frequently an unscheduled small group would come from classroom or laboratory to find books and then return to class. School 2 had very light bookings; indeed, had it

not been for the fourth form skills programme the use of the library would have been minimal. On some occasions unscheduled groups would arrive with research tasks and the library assistants would be obliged both to guide and discipline these students. For them, this unpredictable element in their work is another source of stress.

Many of the students who came to the libraries in class time said they had come because they 'were made to'. There was evidence of considerable resistance to the very idea of spending time in the library. Of those who came from choice, a significant proportion did so for no better reason than that it was warm and they might meet friends there. Senior students did not make as much use of libraries as might be expected, and by and large they were given no opportunities to learn skills for library use.

A great deal of the teaching time in the libraries was not used to best advantage because work was not prepared. It seemed that a number of teachers had problems knowing what to do with classes in the library; some mentioned that they did not use the library as much as they should. The lack of trained staff and carefully planned acquisition policies become most apparent when one teacher is trying to provide an interesting, absorbing programme for about 33

An informal atmosphere encourages reading as a leisure activity.

fourth formers for up to an hour. The Australian experience is relevant here. In the early 1970s, secondary school libraries throughout Australia received generous grants of money, and professional school librarians began to be employed. Writing as early as 1974, W.J. Campbell was able to say that 'it would appear that the new strategies of learning and teaching, which seem to be a consequence of Commonwealth libraries, are beginning to be reflected quite strongly in the academic motivation of students . . . Enhancement of motivation . . . is likely to generate its own effects upon both cognitive and affective outcomes.'[14]

It is unlikely that this country will be able to match the investment of money that was one part of the Commonwealth Libraries Scheme, but the provision of adequate staffing would influence the effectiveness of much of the teaching in school libraries.

Not one of the libraries was as little utilized as some seen in Britain a few years ago; but, equally, none was as efficient and as well-used as others seen in Britain, Australia and the United States. Of the nine libraries surveyed and the two in the pilot study, the most successful in instilling positive attitudes was almost certainly the one where the physical environment was the least promising. There, the librarian's awareness that she had to counteract the effects of lack of space, and shabby furniture, made her more than usually active in promoting the good qualities of the library. Her professional training and the hours which she was able to work were a strong influence in maintaining such a successful library.

7 Secondary School Libraries: The Future

Prospero's phrase, 'my library/was dukedom large enough', implied that the place where he kept his books was of little importance; it was the books themselves which satisfied his needs. There was little indication from the students participating in this survey that they considered the actual building in which the library was housed to be important. Even desks and chairs could be dispensed with. But the person they perceived to be knowledgeable about the books was regarded as playing an important role. Prospero's library is unlikely to have been numbered in the thousands, but he was in charge of it himself and knew it intimately, so he could find what he needed without help from anyone else. Through his library he commanded a part of the universe, he found the power to face the future in a harsh environment, he had friends, he had power. Guiding young people to ways in which they can take possession of their dukedom requires planning and the development of special skills. This research is offered as a contribution to that planning, but much more study is needed.

The time might now be here when it is possible to take a completely new look at ways in which school libraries might develop. To date there has been a period of substantial investment in buildings and another period of reasonably generous allowances for stock purposes. But at no time has there been a major commitment to improving staffing in spite of many strong recommendations. The opportunity to make improvements in this matter will occur within the next few years; consequently, thought should now be given to what schools want their libraries and librarians to do for them.

This survey, though restricted in scale, is an attempt to provide

some information which might be valuable in such an assessment exercise. School libraries clearly need more investigation. Research into the experiences of classes in the library throughout a specified period (such as a term) and the experiences of individual students would be valuable; so too would be a closer examination of teacher attitudes to library periods. These and other studies could point the way to developments in the future.

Suggestions

As a result of the observations made in this study the following suggestions are offered for consideration:

- That in-service time be used in schools to teach library skills to all staff (principals downwards and including ancillary staff). Observations in a large public library have shown that most inquirers are reluctant to use the catalogue and subject index as first steps in self-service. Teachers need to be confident library users themselves if they are to teach these skills to students.
- That a common core of simple reference skills (such as the use of directories, indexes, catalogues, yearbooks) be devised and taught in all schools up to fifth form level, and that sixth- and seventh-formers be given core instruction in more advanced reference skills, as well as the preparation of written work with notes and bibliographies.
- That obligatory English library periods should be done away with. Much of what teachers attempt to instil in the library period could be done better in the classroom with the library visit used to reinforce that teaching. Library periods would therefore be more carefully planned and the students would see them as having a more positive value.
- That the library should cease to be classified as a teaching space and become instead a resource supporting a reference and study skills programme for the whole school.
- That reading for pleasure should be actively promoted by example in every school. Students should be able to see their teachers use books for amusement, for widening their hori-

zons, and for gaining information about leisure interests.

- That librarians in schools be asked to provide book lists and displays for any or all subjects (for example, art history, music, Maori, history, physics, biology) at any level. This would require librarians to have a comprehensive knowledge of the curriculum and to develop a sound working relationship with teachers, attributes not always characteristic of library assistants.

- That each school should look more carefully at the way in which books and periodicals are selected for the library. It may be that most of the library grant for a year is needed to update the reference collection (a yearbook, a good science encyclopedia, new dictionaries of Maori and of New Zealand English, of idioms and of mathematical terms would account for a whole year's spending in some smaller schools) or to provide a good basic collection on computer language or horticulture. The reasons for such decisions should be known and appreciated by teachers.

- That officers of the Department of Education invest as much time and energy in devising a library syllabus as has been spent on, say, computer education or social studies, and that such a syllabus become part of the core curriculum.

- That library assistants not be left so much to create their own standards, but that standards be drawn up for the country as a whole, much more comprehensive than those in the School Library Service's *Manual for School Libraries*, and applied in all schools.

- That teacher-librarians have more time strictly for library work.

- That both library assistants and teacher-librarians have more (possibly compulsory) in-service training.

- That principles of management be established by senior staff in consultation with the School Library Service and the Department of Education. By visiting other schools, by talking in their professional associations, and by reading, heads of departments should examine the ways in which school libraries could be used to support their teaching.

- That in order to obtain access to the experiences of other countries there should be contact within the schools with the school library associations of Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. Having obtained such information, staff should then examine critically and dispassionately how their library is serving them and how that service could be improved.

Conclusion

It is not without significance that in those countries where school library media centres are well established there is a steady flow of research and reappraisal of these centres and their functions. In the USA, for example, in the years 1972-80, no fewer than 151 doctoral dissertations on programmes and resources in libraries were completed. A constant theme in the literature, both here and overseas, is that it is the people who staff the libraries who make them successful or otherwise.

It is fairly clear that the impetus for improvements in school libraries will have to come from teachers, since they are the people with the power to initiate change. C.E. Beeby has emphasized the importance of the teaching profession in the process of educational change:

> My thesis is that there are two strictly professional factors that determine the ability (as distinct from the willingness) of an education system to move from one stage to a higher one. They are
>
> (a) the level of general education of teachers in the system, and
> (b) the amount and kind of training they have received.[15]

The two teacher organizations have given some support to the need for trained school librarians. While the means are worked out of implementing the recommendations of the Fenwick and Foley reports, and all the other statements of earlier years on school library staffing, individual teachers in their schools could be working on their own training so that they are better able to formulate their personal needs in respect of school libraries. Only if they are aware of what is desirable will they be able to contribute positively to achieving what is feasible.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Main characteristics of the libraries, library staff and collections

School Type	*SCHOOL 1* City. Co-educational	*SCHOOL 2* City. Single-sex — M	*SCHOOL 3* City. Single-sex — F	*SCHOOL 4* City. Co-educational
Roll (1981)	1,500	1,100	900	1,050
Library Size (titles)	12,000	8,550	10,000	17,500
Budget (1981)	$4,000	$3,000	$2,500	$1,650
Hours of Library Assistant/s	47	33	33	33
Attitude of Teacher Librarian	Infrequent appearances. Disciplinary role.	Keen but lacking time and skills.	Very involved. Spent much time.	Little involvement.
Reference Section	Good size. Comprehensive. Up-to-date.	Small. Limited range. Out-of-date.	Good size. Comprehensive.	Good size. Comprehensive. Up-to-date.
Periodicals	Wide selection.	Limited selection.	Limited selection.	Wide selection.
Vertical File	Very good. Used often.	Out-of-date.	Good. Used often.	None.
Building Features	Converted classrooms. Comfortable, airy, attractive.	Custom-designed. Awkward.	Converted classrooms. Comfortable but shabby.	Converted classrooms. Moderately attractive.
Location	Well-sited.	Well-sited.	Well-sited.	Well-sited.

Table continued

SCHOOL 5	*SCHOOL 6*	*SCHOOL 7*	*SCHOOL 8*	*SCHOOL 9*
City. Independent. Single-sex — M	Rural. Co-educational. F1-7	City. Co-educational.	Rural. Co-educational.	City. Independent. Singe-sex — F.
680	600	800	1,000	500
10,000	7,500	6,500	8,500	7,150
$990	$1,000	$4,000	$5,000	$2,000
30	30	25	33	18 + free time
None.	Keen, but lacking time and skills.	Knowledge-able but lacked time.	Very involved. Spent much time. Innovative.	None.
Small. Limited range. Up-to-date.	Small. Limited range. Up-to-date.	Good size. Comprehen-sive. Up-to-date.	Good size. Comprehen-sive. Up-to-date.	Small.Compre-hensive. Up-to-date.
Limited.	Limited.	Limited but good quality.	Wide selection.	Limited but good quality.
None.	Adequate. Not used.	None.	Adequate. Not used.	None.
Prefab. Noisy. Moderately attractive.	Custom-designed. Comfortable. Attractive.	Standard design.	Standard design. Attractive.	Prefab. Cramped but attractive.
Isolated.	Well-sited.	Isolated.	Isolated.	Isolated.

Appendix 2

Summary of student responses to questionnaire

I Participants

Sex	Female		Male	
	N	%	N	%
	692	51.4	653	48.6

School	N	%
1	224	16.7
2	128	9.5
3	137	10.2
4	149	11.1
5	131	9.7
6	115	8.6
7	180	13.4
8	214	15.9
9	67	5.0

Level	N	%
1	33	2.5
3	300	22.3
4	401	29.8
5	402	29.9
6	155	11.5
7	54	4.0

Subject	N	%
Non-directed and no answer	298	22.2
English	848	63.0
Japanese	14	1.0
French	15	1.1
Latin	19	1.4
Geography	15	1.1
Science	42	3.1
History	20	1.5
Social Studies	21	1.6
Elective (in Library and Reading)	53	3.9

II Questionnaire responses

1. Why have you come to the library? *(Tick only one)*

	N	%
Because you have a study period	61	*4.5*
Because it is your class time	1,042	*77.5*
Because you have chosen to come (including library duty)	229	*17.0*
Some other reason	13	*1.0*

2. What are you planning to do in the library now?

	Planned Activity I		Planned Activity II	
	N	%	N	%
Nothing	52	*3.9*	5	*0.4*
Borrow	361	*26.8*	82	*6.1*
Return	2	*0.1*	1	*0.1*
Browse	266	*19.8*	106	*7.9*
Assignment	102	*7.6*	6	*0.4*
Reference	16	*1.2*	2	*0.1*
Homework	110	*8.2*	19	*1.4*
Study	40	*3.0*	18	*1.3*
Research	221	*16.4*	12	*0.9*
Read magazines and papers	27	*2.0*	4	*0.3*
Reserve or collect books	1	*0.1*	1	*0.1*
Classwork*	57	*4.2*	26	*1.9*
Library duty	26	*1.9*	10	*0.7*
Other	46	*3.4*	29	*2.2*
No answer	18	*1.3*	1,024	*76.1*

*This was work which had nothing to do with the library and could just as well have been done in the classroom.

3. What do you think students should have to learn about the library? *(Tick those that apply)*

		Yes		Not ticked	
		N	%	N	%
Where to find books on particular subjects		1,118	*83.1*	227	*16.9*
How to use the card catalogue		947	*70.4*	398	*29.6*
What all those numbers on the books mean		539	*40.1*	806	*59.9*
How to use an encyclopedia		687	*51.1*	658	*48.9*
How to find a good story		536	*39.9*	809	*60.1*
Nothing at all		50	*3.7*	1,295	*96.3*
Anything else?					
(Say what)	To be quiet	29	*2.2*	1,316	*97.8*
	How the library is run	12	*0.9*	1,333	*99.1*
	Study skills	5	*0.4*	1,340	*99.6*
	Care of books	6	*0.4*	1,339	*99.6*

4. How important do you think the following things are in any school library? (*Tick one box in each row*)

	Very Important		Quite Important		Not Important		Not Ticked	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The card catalogue	804	*59.8*	487	*36.2*	43	*3.2*	11	*0.8*
The reference books	809	*60.1*	473	*35.2*	48	*3.6*	15	*1.1*
Desks and chairs	464	*34.5*	565	*42.0*	302	*22.5*	14	*1.0*
Displays of new books	233	*17.3*	762	*56.7*	329	*24.5*	21	*1.6*
Newspapers	167	*12.4*	672	*50.0*	490	*36.4*	16	*1.2*
Magazines	179	*13.3*	666	*49.5*	480	*35.7*	20	*1.5*
A photocopier	519	*38.6*	507	*37.7*	269	*20.0*	50	*3.7*
Signs to show where to find certain books	712	*52.9*	471	*35.0*	146	*10.9*	16	*1.2*
The librarian	752	*55.9*	365	*27.1*	214	*15.9*	14	*1.0*
Your class teacher	136	*10.1*	401	*29.9*	726	*54.0*	82	*6.1*
Anything else?								
(You name them) Quietness	32	*2.4*	4	*0.3*	1	*0.1*	1,308	*97.2*

5. Do you think that what you learn about the school library is going to be useful when you leave school?

	N	%
Yes	913	67.9
No	411	30.6
Partly	1	0.1
No reply	20	1.5

6. How often do you come to this library? *(Tick one in each row)*

	On Your Own		With a Class	
	N	%	N	%
More than once a week	457	34.0	83	6.2
Once a week	218	16.2	717	53.3
Once a fortnight	99	7.4	291	21.6
Once a month	45	3.3	34	2.5
Occasionally	333	24.8	133	9.9
Never	144	10.7	66	4.9
No reply	49	3.6	21	1.5

Answer these questions *just before you leave the library.*

7. Did you do what you had planned to do during this visit to the library?

	N	%
Yes	864	64.2
No	372	27.7
Partly	81	6.0
No reply	28	2.1

If you didn't, please say why not. *(Tick those that apply)*

	Yes	%
It was too noisy	74	5.5
The books I wanted were not on the shelf	151	11.2
There was no one around to help me	10	0.7
Some friends came in and we talked	145	10.8
Any other reason? *(Say which)* No time	111	8.3

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THE SECONDARY SCHOOL *Library*

How much and how often do teachers and students use the available resources of school libraries? What are their opinions, needs and expectations about them, and how often are they met? What are students taught about the skills needed to use a library effectively? And how well prepared are they to use tertiary institutional libraries or public libraries once they leave school? These are some of the questions that the author has tried to answer in this study.

Mrs Smart believes that, while library buildings and stocks have improved in recent years, there has been no major commitment to better staffing, in spite of strong recommendations from earlier reports. However, there are now signs that positive changes in this area will occur within the next few years.

A trained librarian with 'the zeal of a recent convert', Mrs Smart has written a clear, very readable study which will interest teachers, principals, policy-makers and especially school librarians who will take heart from its list of sensible and practical suggestions.

The Author

Patricia (Paddy) Smart began her career as a librarian rather late in life, after almost 20 years as a wife and mother, living in different parts of the country, and supplementing the family income with work as a teacher, in an accountant's office, as a free-lance journalist and as a publisher's assistant. She writes with experience, having had sole responsibility for a Forms I–VII school library. She is now working part-time in a small education library, which leaves her time to do research and writing, create a garden, write letters to friends and walk with her Airedale terrier.